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ABSTRACT

These proceedings of the annual accreditation and quality assurance conference present the following papers: "The Coming Revolution in Higher Education" (Arthur Levine); "Corporate/College Alliances" (Jeanne C. Meister); "Why Are We Educators?" (Catharine R. Stimpson); "Serving an Increasingly Adult Student Population: Lessons from Nordstrom and Wal Mart in the Restructuring of Higher Education" (Julie E. Porosky); "Faculty Leadership in Assessment-Based Curricular Reform" (Bruce Keith; Carolyn J. Haessig; Armand S. LaPotin); "Broadening Teaching Options Through Technology Centers" (Arthur R. Edmonds); "Benchmarking in Outcomes Assessment" (Patricia L. Francis, and others); "Comprehensive Change in a Large University" (Celeste E. Freytes and others); "State University Systems at the Crossroads" (Norman I. Maldonado; John W. Ryan); and "Classroom-Based Assessment in General Education" (Virginia Johnson Anderson and others). Following the papers are two advisory committee reports: "Governance, Governing Boards, and Regional Accreditation" (with remarks by panelist Marvin Greenberg) and "Financial Resources, Institutional Effectiveness, and Accreditation" (with remarks by panelist Rita J. Carney). A final section provides some guiding principles for planning the next review of "Characteristics of Excellence," including a timetable and a list of steering committee members. (Most papers contain references.) (CH)

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Innovation for Strength

Proceedings of AQA'98

The Annual Accreditation and Quality Assurance Conference

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Middle States
Commission on Higher Education

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Table of Contents

The Coming Revolution in Higher Education 1
Arthur Levine, Teachers College, Columbia University

Corporate/College Alliances 15
Jeanne C. Meister, Corporate University Xchange, Inc.

Why Are We Educators? 31
Catharine R. Stimpson, New York University

Serving an Increasingly Adult Student Population: Lessons from Nordstrom and Wal Mart in the Restructuring of Higher Education 49
Julia E. Porosky, University of Maryland University College

Faculty Leadership in Assessment-based Curricular Reform 59
Bruce Keith, United States Military Academy; and
Carolyn J. Haessig and
Armand S. La Potin, SUNY/Oneonta

Broadening Teaching Options through Technology Centers 83
Arthur R. Edmonds, Delaware Technical & Community College

Benchmarking in Outcomes Assessment 91
Patricia L. Francis and William F. Sharp, SUNY/Cortland;
Marianne R. Klimchuk, SUNY/Fashion Institute of Technology;
John Conners, Cortland Community College; and
Marjorie W. Lavin, SUNY/Empire State College

Comprehensive Change in a Large University 113
Celeste E. Freytes,
Ana Helvia Quintero,
Pedro A. Sandín-Fremaint
and Haydée Alvarado-Santos,
University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras

State University Systems at the Crossroads 143
Norman I. Maldonado, University of Puerto Rico
John W. Ryan, State University of New York

Classroom-based Assessment in General Education 159
Virginia Johnson Anderson, Towson University;
Barbara Bardes and Janice Denton, Raymond Walters College of the University of Cincinnati;
Louise Feroe, Mercy College;
Carol A. Moore, Lyndon State College; and
Barbara E. Walvoord, University of Notre Dame

Governance, Governing Boards, and Regional Accreditation: Report of the Advisory Committee on Governance 173
with Remarks by Panelist Marvin Greenberg

Financial Resources, Institutional Effectiveness, and Accreditation: Report of the Advisory Committee on Institutional Financial Resources 181
with Remarks by Panelist Rita J. Carney

Planning the Next Review of *Characteristics of Excellence* 191

The Coming Revolution in American Higher Education

Arthur Levine
President, Teachers College, Columbia University

It's an honor to be at my first global plenary meeting. I didn't know my speech was supposed to be a motivational speech and I apologize. When I heard a few moments ago that I was to give a motivational speech, all I could think of was a commencement address by Kurt Vonnegut. He got up before the graduates and said, "Things are very, very, very bad, and they're never going to get better again. Thank you."

I think our situation is a little better, but let me tell you what you've got yourself in for. I have to leave after the speech because I have to go back and teach a course. I just got my teaching evaluations back from last term and I have one I wanted to share with you. I had a student who wrote, "If I had 20 minutes left to live, I'd want to spend them in Arthur Levine's class...because every minute with Arthur Levine feels like an hour!" So we've got a little under two days together.

Last week, I was at a video conference sponsored by the College Board and the Public Broadcast System. It was on the future of higher education, and I was sitting in the green room with the other people participating in the conference. I found myself sitting there with the president of the University of Phoenix, the president of DeVry, and the executive vice president of Kaplan, which has created an online law school. And I thought to myself, I haven't been involved in a lot of conferences with guys like these.

One of the real shockers over the last year has been that I have a meeting several times a month with a television network, a telephone company, a cable system, a new startup company, an investment firm, or a venture capital group. What they're all proposing is partnerships. They say, "There's a group that isn't being adequately educated and we have to join together and educate them." Or, alternatively, "There's some brand-new way that we need to educate students that higher education is not doing, and we need to do that together.

What I want to do today is to talk about five trends that I think have the capacity to make a big difference in our lives and a big difference in higher education.

Higher Education and Government

The first is the changing status of higher education and our biggest patron, which is government. For the past decade we've been witnessing a change in that relationship. Government has been less supportive politically and financially. The first hypothesis to explain the change is that the lack of support was caused by declining government revenues. When revenues increase, surely government support will as well.

The second hypothesis is priorities have changed. We just have new priorities. Education was the highest priority for a very long time, or one of the highest, and now priorities have shifted. More important are prisons, infrastructure, and health. With regard to education, the focus has shifted from higher education to K–12, and from adults to kids.

But I think there's really a third reason that the relationship is changing, and it's this. I think higher education has become a mature industry. And what I mean by that is nearly 65 percent of all high school graduates are now going on to some form of postsecondary education. I don't see any state government that's saying, "Gee, 65 percent is a nice beginning." When you talk to legislators, they're saying, "That sounds pretty good. As a matter

of fact, that may be too much. We don't need all this higher education. Sixty-five percent, that's a huge proportion!"

And what that represents is a dramatic change in the condition of higher education in America. Throughout this century, higher education has been a growth industry. The only times we haven't grown are two years of the depression and the world wars. After World War II, the government said, "Our biggest priority is increasing participation in higher education. We will give you lots and lots of money, very few questions asked, and all you have to do is increase capacity. We will pay for financial aid; we'll pay for new campuses; we'll pay for more faculty; we might even provide revenues to support private higher education. Just enroll more and more people." Very few questions were asked of us.

Governments treat mature industries very differently from growth industries. What they do with mature industries is seek to regulate them. They seek to control them. They ask very hard questions about the cost of the enterprise, about its efficiency, about its productivity, and about its effectiveness. They attempt to limit its size. They attempt to limit its funding. They diminish the autonomy of mature industries and demand greater accountability.

And that's what we're seeing today. Government is asking higher education questions it has never asked before. The cost of higher education is being scrutinized. The price of higher education is being attacked loudly and continually. Questions of productivity and efficiency are being raised. How much should faculty teach? What's the appropriate balance between teaching and research? How much should it cost to educate a student? Should we have lifetime appointments for faculty? Can new technologies take the place of some of the things we used to do on campuses? What programs should we offer? How much overlap should there be between the programs we offer on different campuses?

And we're being asked questions about effectiveness. Why aren't graduation rates higher? Why should it take students more than four years to graduate? Why do colleges offer an increasing amount of remedial education?

Government is shifting the relationship between higher education and the public. The focus is moving from teaching, what it is we do in our classrooms, to learning, what students get out of being in our classrooms. We are shifting from process—credits and degrees—to outcomes. What is it students actually get by spending time with us?

As a growth industry, we could count on additional revenues every year. Growth and progress were treated as synonyms; new activities were a matter of addition; they were simply added to the old. We're the only industry I know in which competition increases price. What happens is the school down the block has a new computer system, so we have to get a better new computer system. If they've added a museum, we have to add a museum. If they've added a swimming pool, we have to add a natatorium (whatever that may be).

In a mature industry, change occurs by substitution. If you want to do something new, something old has got to go. If higher education can't figure out what it is that ought to go, government is increasingly willing to help us make those decisions. And I think the likely outcome of all this is to be a boutique-ing of higher education.

What I mean by that is, most colleges and universities are fundamentally alike in this country. We differ by the number of years in the programs we offer; we differ by whether we have upper division and graduate programs, but mostly we differ by how many professional schools we have. And to that extent, what most of higher education is like is comprehensive department stores. And I think what we're going to see in the years ahead is pressure on higher education to limit the number of things that it does. To become more and more sharply focussed, looking more and more like the boutiques we find in most malls. The current wisdom is, higher education must do more with less. The reality

is, we're going to end up doing less with less. And the job we have is to figure out is what less is really critical to us and what less we are willing to give up.

Changing Character of Students

A second trend that we're seeing is the changing student character. The traditional college student, 18 to 22, full time, and living in residence, now constitutes 16 percent of all college students. The new majority, as you all know, is part time, female, working adults, over 25 years of age.

We were doing a study of college students. We surveyed a representative sample of 9,100 undergraduates, and we also carried out focus group analyses on 28 campuses. The most interesting students in our study were the older adults. We asked them, "Tell me about the relationship you want with your college." These are people who haven't come to college to grow up or discover who they are. They've come to college largely because they want credentials. They have lives outside of campus. They have jobs; they have families; they have friendships, and college is not the primary activity in their lives.

We asked what kind of relationship they want with their college. They said, "It ought to be like the relationship I have now with the gas company, the supermarket, or my bank." I thought a lot about this. I know exactly the relationship I want with my bank. I want an ATM on every corner. I want to know that when I get to the ATM there's nobody else in line. I want my check deposited immediately, or maybe the day before it arrives, and I want no mistakes unless they are in my favor. I also know what I don't want from my bank. What I don't want are softball leagues, psychiatric counseling, or religious services. I can get all of those things myself if I want them.

Older adults are saying they want the same relationship with us. What they say is, I want convenience. Classes 24 hours a day wouldn't be all bad. And in-class parking would be superb. What they want is service. Going to the bursar ought to be helpful.

Going to the financial aid office ought to have more predictability than playing the lottery. What they're saying is, they want high-quality instruction: Give me great instructors who know their subject matter, who are actually there, who know how to teach, who return my work in a timely fashion with comments. And after you've done all that, give me low cost and don't charge me for anything I don't use.

Here's a group that's saying they don't want student activities. They do want services. What I think this group is looking for is a stripped-down version of higher ed, and they are going to find it. They are going to find it in some of the new schools we just talked about, which are going to spring up in their suburban communities. They're going to spring up in their workplaces, too. This is a group that is going to gravitate toward online instruction where they can receive it at home or receive it in the workplace.

The other interesting group to me is younger adults who were also part of that study. And there are four characteristics that stand out which are likely to affect us in the future. The first is rising levels of remediation. Seventy-five percent of colleges are offering more remediation than they did five years ago, and 33 percent of all students are taking courses in reading, writing, or arithmetic.

A second characteristic that we're finding among students is they're working: 70 percent of traditional undergraduates are working, and a majority are working 20 hours a week. They're spending less time on campus than they did a few years ago.

A third characteristic that stands out among this group is cost. Only 4 percent of American families can afford the sticker price of a private college education.

The final characteristic that stands out in this group is that there's a growing mismatch between how students learn and faculty teach. Charles Schroeder did some illuminating research. Knowledge can be divided between the poles of abstract and concrete. Learning can be divided between passive and active.

It turns out that among those of us who entered academe, our favored method of teaching is abstract and passive. It turns out that for our students, who look like much of the rest of the country, they favor concrete and active learning.

And you can see the result every year. The first class ends and professors en masse begin running towards the admissions office at top speed. They grab the admissions director by his or her collar and begin shaking vigorously, saying, "Where did you get these students? These are the worst students in the history of this college. I thought last year's were the worst, but these are even worse than last year's!" And you watch students as they walk out of class and look at one another and say, "Do you have a clue what that was about?"

Colleges are going to have to change how they teach. And that's going to be a major issue for us in the years to come.

The Rise of New Technologies

A third trend is the rise of new technologies. It's a wild card. Before I left Boston to come to New York, I was having a conversation with the publisher of the *Boston Globe*. He said, "We expect to be out of the newspaper business within two decades." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "You'll get your newspaper electronically. You'll be able to pick your headline. You can have anything you want as a headline. You pick the topic. You could say, I want to start every day with a joke, and the top of your newspaper would be the Boston Celtics score. Or alternatively, you could say, I have young children in the house, so include no political news in my newspaper. "

The implications for us are enormous. Textbooks are dying. We're moving to learning materials that can be customized for the students who are in our classes. There won't be any excuse for those of us who are still using yellowed notes to teach our courses year after year after year. The range of materials and the scope that's possible is going to be incredible in terms of customizing and individualization.

In the same vein, I was recently taking a transcontinental flight and I finished the book I was reading and I finished the work I was doing, and I was so desperate, I read the airline magazine. And in that magazine there was a story about the travel agency of the future. And it said they're going to show you your trip virtually. You're going to walk into the travel agency and what they'll show you is the hotel room you're going to stay in, what the room actually looks like. You'll be able to walk the beaches, see the restaurants. It's extraordinary.

Imagine if we do that in academe. What happens if instead of telling a student about fifteenth-century Paris, we can take that student there. It's coming. The question is, how long. What would happen if we could have a student smell the smells—which must have been putrid—walk the cobblestones, go into the buildings. How is a stand-up lecture on fifteenth-century Paris going to match that?

The reality is that it is possible right now for the director of Middle States to give a lecture here, for me to take that lecture at Teachers College, and for another student in Tokyo to take that same lecture. It's possible for all of us to feel we're sitting in the same classroom. It's possible for me to nudge the student from Tokyo and say, "I missed the director's last comment. What was it?"; have my question translated into Japanese; have the answer back in English in seconds. It's possible for the director to point to me and my Japanese colleague and say, "I want you to prepare a project for next week's class." It is possible for me to ask my Japanese colleague, "Will you have tea with me after class?"

If we can do all of that and the demographics of higher education have changed as much as they have, and so few people are living on campus or spending time on campus, why do we need the physical plant called the college? A number of states are realizing this and telling their colleges, "Don't ask for new buildings, ask for new technologies."

We built a system of higher education based on propinquity. In the years after World War II, the Truman Commission on Higher Education issued a report that said the nation needed to overcome

the barriers that stopped Americans from attending college, and one of them was geography. In its aftermath, we tried to build a campus in easy proximity of every American. We've now reached over 90 percent of Americans. What happens when geography dies? How long will it be before states like California begin to ask, "Why did we create nine public research universities? Does any state need nine public research universities?" Or for New York to ask, "Why do we need 64 physical campuses if so few of our students are spending time on campus?"

I think the largest issue, particularly for us in Middle States, is going to be that our regional populations are growing slowly compared to the West. Yet we, as well as New England and the Midwest, have the largest number of campuses. There is a mismatch between campuses and population already.

Growth of the Private Sector

Higher education is being criticized today by government, the press, and a raft of books and reports. And that brings us to the fourth trend—the growth of the private sector.

Higher education is an industry with revenues of $225 billion, and that is causing the private sector to look at postsecondary education as a potential target for investment.

I was talking to the chair of an Ivy League university (not my own) who said, "If higher education were a publicly traded stock, it would be overripe for a hostile takeover."

But the most alarming conversation I had was with Michael Milken this summer. Michael Milken looked at me and said, "You know, you're in an industry which is worth hundreds of billions of dollars, and you have a reputation for low productivity, high cost, bad management, and no use of technology." His next comment was, "We're going to eat your lunch." We weren't dining at the moment, so I took that to be a critical comment. He said, "You're going to be the next health care."

These days one thing we talk about all the time in higher education is the University of Phoenix. It's an amazing phenomenon. Here's a for-profit university which has all the appropriate regional accreditation, and it's traded on NASDAC. It's now the largest private university in the United States. They'd like to reach 200,000 students within the next decade. They're online with 4,500 students, and they have thrown out most of what we believe in. They use mostly part-time faculty. The salary equivalent of a full-time faculty member teaches a score of courses. Class syllabi are uniform; they are prepared every few years. Phoenix prepares those syllabi by using industry professionals and academics in the field to plan the syllabus. Every professor who teaches a course of the same title teaches the same course. And they evaluate everything. Their assessment is more sophisticated than almost any other college's I've seen before.

Phoenix is the largest proprietary institution in the country in higher education, and its example is being watched by entrepreneurs across the country. Wall Street firms are developing higher education practices for investment purposes. Venture capital firms are starting to invest in higher education enterprises. I recently saw a list 30 pages long, single-spaced, of for-profit firms that have entered higher education.

Not long ago I was asked a question at a conference, "What's your biggest fear?" And I said, "I think in the next few years we're going to see some firm begin to hire well-known faculty at our most prestigious campuses and offer an all-star degree over the Internet. So they'll take the best faculty members from Stanford, Berkeley, University of Chicago, and Harvard—and what they'll do is offer a program at a lower cost than we can."

And I began thinking, a topnotch faculty member, the top-notchest faculty member on our campus, costs us well over a hundred thousand dollars a year, including benefits. And if I'm lucky, that faculty member will touch a couple of hundred students. If they're lucky, their online faculty member will touch thousands of students. The economics are not in our favor.

So I finished the speech and some fellow came running up to me and said, "Who told you?" I said, "What do you mean, 'Who told me?' This isn't rocket science." He said, "We're doing this. Who leaked?" The simple fact is that we're going to see a number of these enterprises. I have run into four or five in the last three months.

We had a discussion of distance learning on our campus a few weeks ago. We had just signed an agreement to work on a project with Sylvan. Sylvan has created 40 or 50 centers around the country. They signed an agreement with Johns Hopkins to offer a master's in health care; they signed an agreement with the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania to offer a program which will deal with business, and they've asked Teachers College to offer a certificate program in education. We were discussing this at the faculty meeting, and one faculty member rose from his chair and said, "This violates everything I have ever cared about. This violates our reason for joining academe and coming to a university." Another faculty member got up after hearing this and said, "I think the next faculty meeting ought to deal with the ethics of the overhead projector."

The second faculty member made a joke of the concerns of the first, but the fact is we're being pushed in the direction of new technologies, and our faculties are not ready to do this. The biggest danger, I think, is that higher education may be the next railroad industry. The railroads decided they were in the railroad business and they built bigger and better railroads decade after decade. The reality was they were in the transportation industry, and they were nearly put out of business by airplanes. For us, we are not in the campus business, we are in the education business.

Convergence in Knowledge-Producing Organizations

Last trend. I'm seeing a real convergence in knowledge-producing organizations, whether they be publishers, or television networks, or libraries, or museums, or colleges and universities. A few weeks ago, I was visiting Simon & Schuster.

I talked with the head of the technology unit, who said, "We're not in the book business anymore." I said, "Really, what business are you in?" He said, "We're in the knowledge business. Our big focus now is teacher education. We're using television and we're using computers and we're in thousands of schools. We want to put our brand name on professional development for teachers." They want to be the Frank Perdue of professional development for teachers.

I asked the next question, Where do you get your content? Our content people are on staff, not at universities. I said, What about credits? He said, We're working on that.

In the years ahead, every knowledge-producing organization will begin to produce more and more similar kinds of products.

So what's all this add up to? Let me do the motivational part now. None of these trends appear to be highly in our favor. Let me tell you about the rest of my conversation with Michael Milken. Milken told me that the train was leaving the station and I needed to get on board. And I told him I thought the train was leaving the station, too, but I thought higher education was driving. I looked at him and said, "We have content and you don't. What you have is distribution. We live in a digital age in which television stations and cable stations and telephone companies and computer companies and Internet companies all need content, and higher education has the content."

We've got teaching and research. And that's an incredible resource now. I don't know that it will be forever, but it is now, and we own it. And the question is, how do we want to use it?

These trends are such that we have a small amount of time to stop and think on each of our campuses and ask, "What do we want to do? In our states, how do we want to do it?" We're all entering the digital age. Not to answer that question is to make a profound decision. Answering that question defines a role for the future that may be different from the role of higher education for the present, but every campus has to ask it, particularly those

campuses that don't emphasize exclusively residential experiences or the on-campus co-curricular experiences that students have.

If I asked you who is the leading name in virtual bookstores, what would you tell me? Amazon! Nobody yelled out Barnes & Noble. Barnes & Noble turned its back for three years and found a company had been developed that controlled the virtual market. We can't turn our backs.

What is also true is this. A few years ago, Microsoft went to Encyclopedia Britannica and said, We want you to come online. And Encyclopedia Britannica said, We don't do that, we do hard copy. So Microsoft bought Funk & Wagnalls and turned it into Encarta. A few years later, Encyclopedia Britannica found its market was being eaten away and went back to Microsoft and said, "Okay, we're ready, you win." And Microsoft said, We are thrilled, just thrilled. By the way, it's going to cost you for every copy you put online. In the space of only a few years, Microsoft had changed its relationship with Encyclopedia Britannica from partner to customer.

I was re-reading Henry Adams' description of his life at college. He said, I came to college at a time in which the curriculum had not changed in a few decades. I received an 18th century education when I attended college in the 19th century. And I was living in a world that was plunging toward the 20th century. For my generation, education in a space of just a few years had fallen 200 years behind the times.

That's the opportunity and the challenge that each of us and our institutions face today.

Corporate/College Alliances

A Report on the 1998 Survey of Global Education Best Practices

Jeanne C. Meister
President, Corporate University Xchange, Inc.

The practice of corporate/college alliances, necessitated by a variety of critical global economic factors, is here to stay and continues to reinvent itself in a number of innovative ways. As ongoing corporate/college alliances evolve and corporations continue to seek partnerships with institutions of higher education, certain key elements necessary for these alliances to succeed are becoming clearer, and colleges are learning more about the business world in order to become more adept partners.

Corporate University Xchange recently completed a survey of business schools around the world entitled the "1998 Survey of Global Education Best Practices." The survey was sponsored by AACSB-The International Association for Management Education and the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD).

The survey was based on hour-long telephone interviews—including both closed and open-ended questions—with 50 business schools around the world, including 30 U.S. schools and 20 international schools (Figure 1). The majority of the business schools surveyed were private schools, especially the international ones (Figure 2). The executive education departments of the schools surveyed varied in size with U.S. executive education departments averaging more than international (Figure 3).

Figure 1

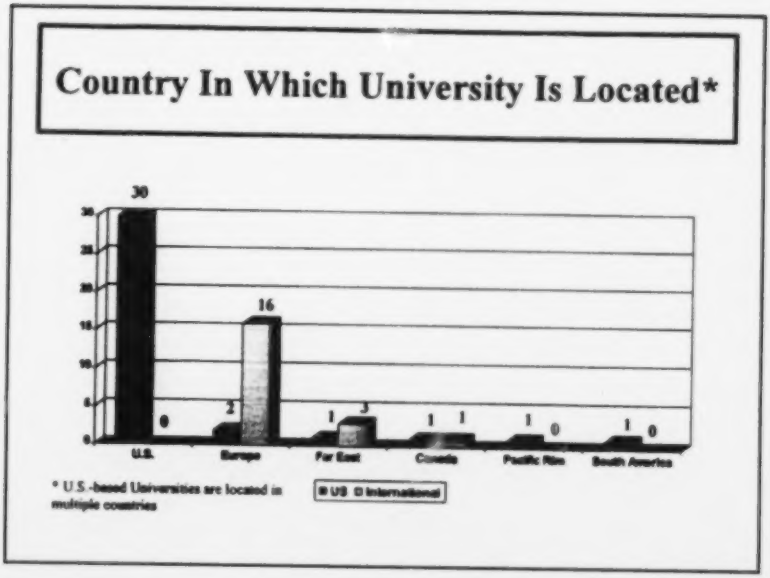


Figure 2

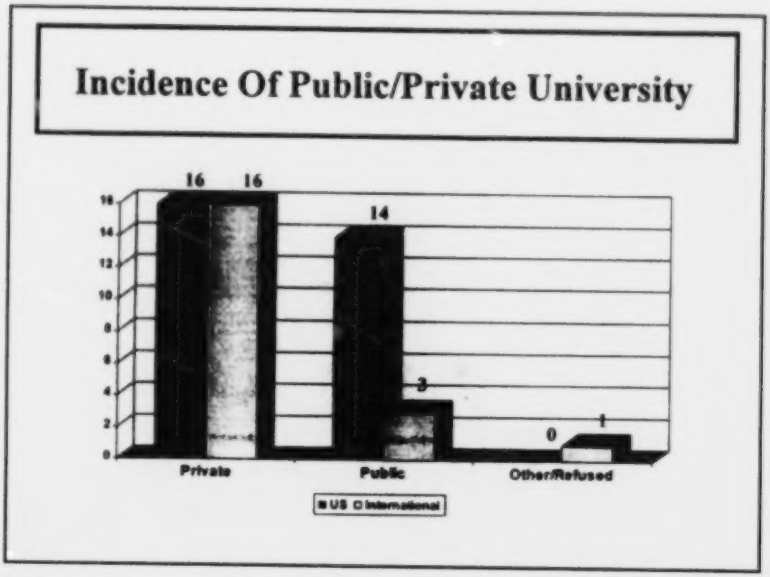
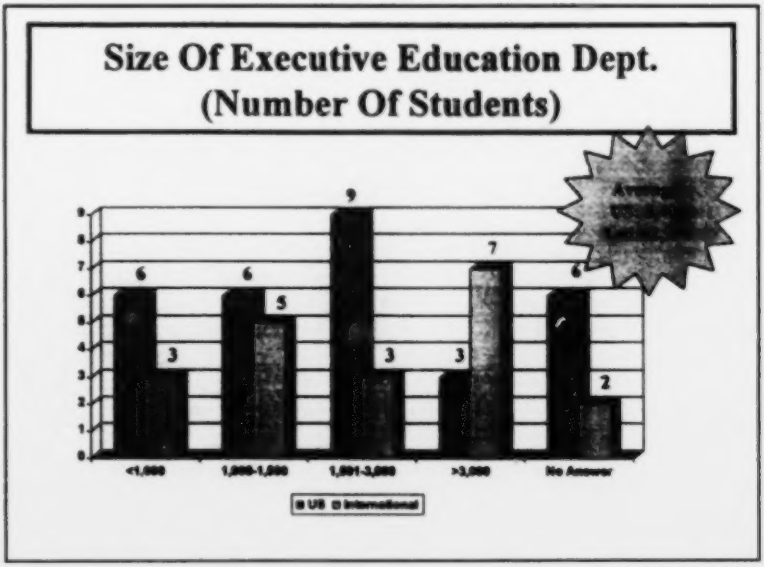


Figure 3



Deeper Corporate/University Alliances

Corporate/college alliances have burgeoned for several key reasons that relate primarily to the need for corporations to leverage the capacity of colleges as research centers (Figures 4 and 5). Universities, in turn, have sought alliances to meet long-term objectives such as generating revenue, connecting their business curriculum to the real world, and establishing for their students new sources for internships and jobs. Both U.S. and international business are in almost complete concurrence on the reasons for alliances.

The development of alliances also stems from the fact that corporate reengineering and globalization have presented challenges to organizations for whom education is not a core competency. The major goal in a number of alliances, as in the one between Indiana University and Whirlpool—which changed its orientation to the international market—is to make an

Figure 4

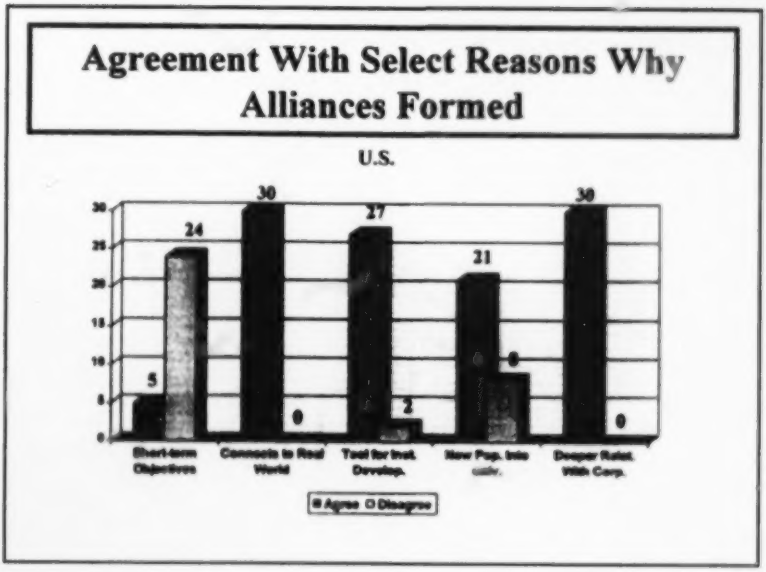
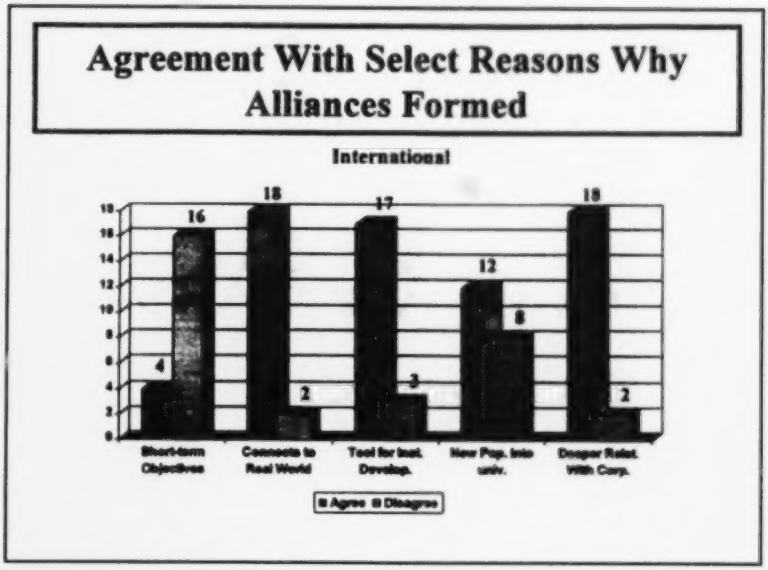


Figure 5



organization more effective in responding to the complexity of a global business environment, and help it position itself as a leader in redefining its industry.

New corporate strategies dictate new learning initiatives, thus the need for university partners. For example, Case Corporation, makers of earth moving and agriculture equipment, formed an alliance with University of California-Berkeley when the organization changed its orientation from product-driven to customer-driven.

Partnerships with universities also represent an effort by many organizations to become employers of choice—for both current and potential employees—by providing certificate, degree, and non-degree programs to their employees and, in some cases, to members of their value chain—customers and suppliers.

As alliances have grown (Figure 6), subject areas have also broadened, but the standard executive education curriculum still dominates (Figure 7), with an emphasis, at least in the U.S., on leadership development, strategic planning, and competitive analysis. International schools concentrate heavily in the area of global management, and include some finance, marketing, and leadership development in the curricula they offer to their corporate partners. Interestingly, international schools offer very little competitive analysis curriculum to their corporate partners, as opposed to the U.S. in which this represents a major subject area.

Ambitious corporate strategies often lead to the decision to partner with a university or universities. But shared interests and mutual trust have allowed corporations and colleges to enter into deeper, more substantial partnerships, such as involvement by senior executives in school advisory boards and the placement of graduates into key industry positions.

Figure 6

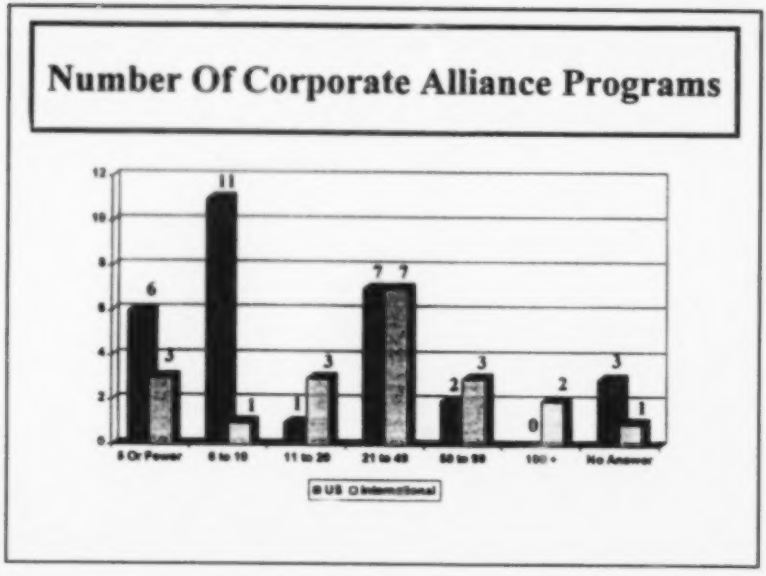
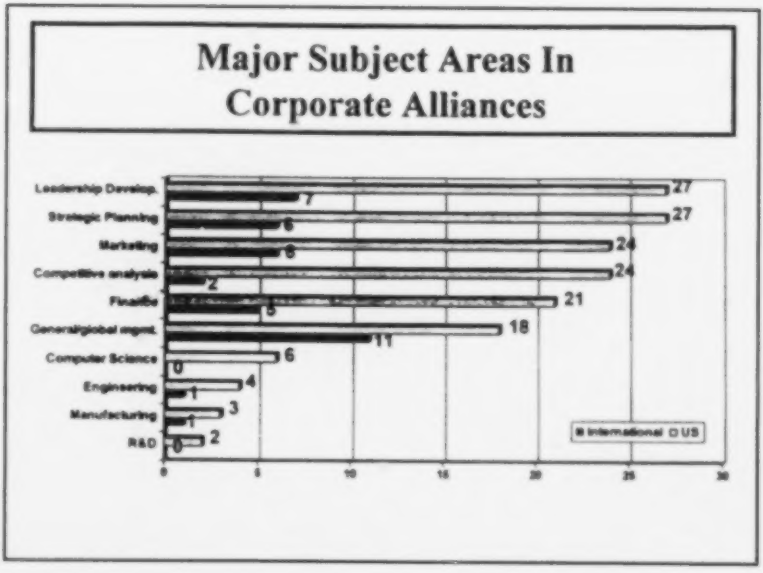


Figure 7



Selection Criteria in Establishing an Alliance

The selection criteria for determining the right university partner must be clearly defined to create an effective alliance (Figures 8 and 9). From the outset of the alliance, there must be commonality between the partners regarding key parameters of the culture, structure, and strategy of the corporation. Interestingly, the most important selection criteria include articulating a shared vision, clearly defining roles, responsibilities and deliverables, having global capabilities, and having both the university and corporate partner assume shared risk in designing new executive development programs.

According to Mike Stahl, director of the physician's executive MBA program and distinguished professor of management at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville: "I think a shared vision refers to the return that goes to the two partners. If they can't articulate that, if they don't understand it—in terms of placement of graduates, in terms of applied training, in terms of development issues—if they don't understand what that means, I don't know how it would work."

University of Tennessee's college of business has an alliance with nearby Eastman Chemical Co. that exemplifies a number of key selection criteria, including close ties—due to proximity and a long-standing relationship—world-class capabilities, and a flexible but clear agreement on the roles, responsibilities and deliverables expected of each partner. "It was important," says Stahl, "that both of us were working from the same page. To achieve what we wanted to. We needed a partner that was ready to go to the next level with us."

Regarding selection criteria, U.S. and international business believe many of the same factors are important, with one noteworthy exception. U.S. schools place a much higher emphasis on using technology for learning than their international counterparts, while the international schools put a higher priority on global capabilities.

In Corporate University Xchange's *1998 Survey of Corporate University Future Directions*, a study conducted with the deans of 100 corporate universities, the selection criteria of shared vision and sharing risks ranked nearly the same in importance as in the Global Education Study. However, corporate universities deemed technology for learning and performance measures more important selection criteria for choosing a learning partner, probably reflecting the corporate concern with establishing clear outcomes for investing in employee education.

Critical Factors in a Successful Alliance

The survey uncovered a number of critical success factors necessary to sustain a thriving alliance (Figure 10). Support from the top echelon of the corporate partner is one of the most important factors in a successful alliance. Well-defined roles, responsibilities and expectations, investment in technology, and operational flexibility—to adapt to changing dynamics within the economic climate as well as within the corporate partner's organization—are also key factors necessary for a successful alliance.

It is also extremely important that the university faculty involved in the partnership learn the business of their corporate partner. Nänty Meyer, former executive director of the Berkeley Center for Executive Development, says: "It is absolutely crucial to invest time in understanding the strategic imperatives of the corporation and in knowing the issues that surface at the operational level—and by operational level I mean at the level of the people who make the decisions at the manufacturing plant level. It is crucial to develop an intimate understanding of what the strategic imperatives, challenges and opportunities are. If you don't develop that, there is absolutely no way you can deliver a program that adds value to the corporation. It is the key point of this entire venture."

A majority of the business schools in the Survey Global Education and a large percentage of the corporations in the *1998 Survey of Corporate University Future Directions* said that

Figure 8

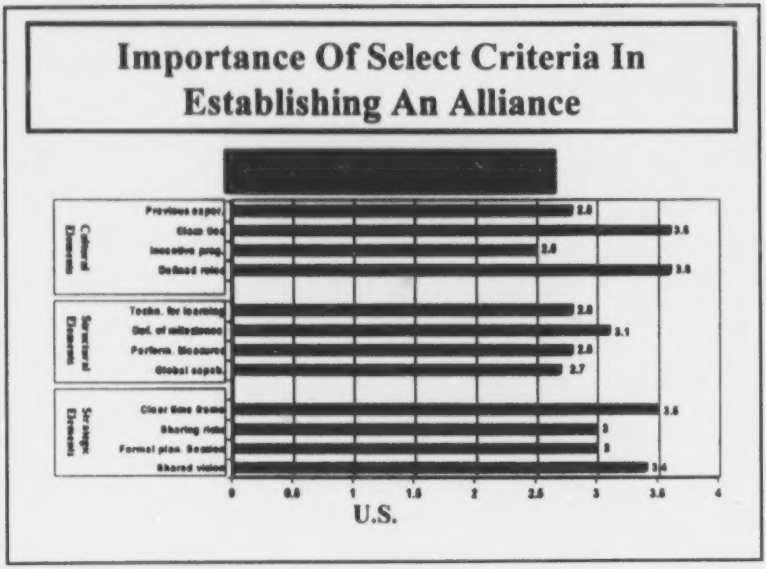
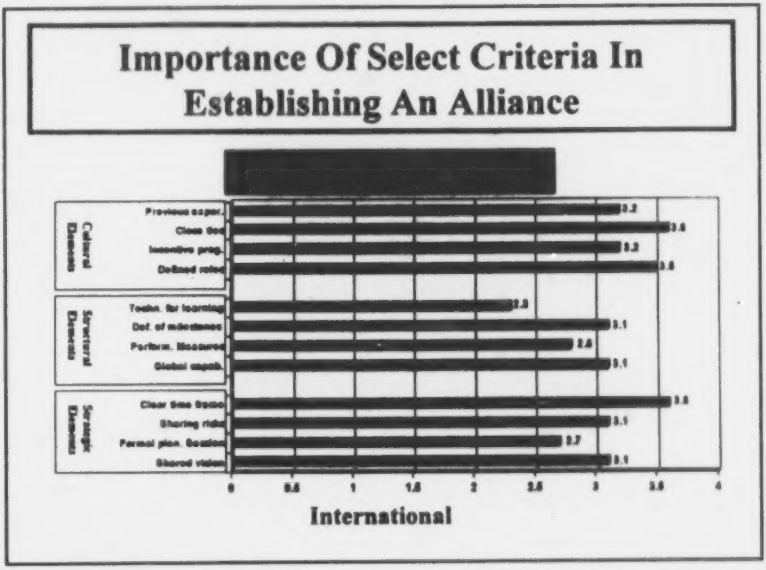


Figure 9



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23

clearly defined roles/expectations represents a primary success factor in an alliance. Business school deans, like the corporate university deans, believe flexibility and creativity on both sides is a key success factor. But the two groups acknowledge a set of somewhat disparate success guidelines. For example, corporate university directors find that maximizing learning resources is a key criterion for developing a successful alliance with a university and establishing portable credentials. Colleges, on the other hand, stress the importance of listening to the client and making sure the faculty is willing (and able) to deliver. These differences in success factors reflect the two groups' respective roles as corporate client and university vendor.

Customized Programs

The logical outgrowth of an alliance in which the university becomes intimately familiar with its partner's business is a customized program designed to suit the unique business needs of the corporation. This requires a sustained commitment by the university faculty and a major role shift—acknowledged by both parties—from provider of traditional executive education to provider of business solutions; it means becoming a "solutions-oriented business partner."

As defined by the respondents in our survey, a solutions-oriented business partner proactively analyzes a client's business issues to define and drive optimal business results, and draws upon an increased network of resources to solve client problems and generate solutions. Also, a business partner uses a broader understanding of the client's business to formulate creative responses to its needs. Finally, in the role of business partner, faculty can define and act on client situations as a continual process flow, rather than as discrete and disconnected events.

Aligning Faculty Skills with Industry

As institutions of higher learning insinuate themselves more into the private sector, it is becoming increasingly important for faculty members involved with corporate alliances to develop a new skill set in order to operate as true business partners. This new skill set draws upon a combination of relationship building skills, project management, and communications, and is essential to maintaining an effective alliance (Figure 11).

Key differences between business and academia dictate new approaches to how faculty performs their jobs. For example, the drastically shorter cycle time in business dictates that customized executive education programs be developed in far less time than is normal at the university. Also, the nature of business requires a more collaborative effort, often requiring faculty from one school to work with faculty from another school, and jointly agree on the scope, objectives, and deliverables of a customized executive education program. Additionally, our survey of corporate university directors highlighted the importance of faculty being able to think cross-functionally because all business problems are inherently cross-functional.

According to Cam Danielson, director of executive education for Indiana University's Kelly School of Business: "One thing the faculty working with us have had to learn is that you don't come into a meeting as a subject matter expert; you come into the meeting with several different hats on and you have to figure out what's being said, what's the context, why is this necessary. You're really trying to be a critical observer, and then you get into much more of a facilitative discussion. You want to draw out the client; you want to ask the kinds of questions that really begin to paint the picture of this organization and their needs, with enough detail that you can respond with a proposal that recognizes what they need to do and how you can provide a solution."

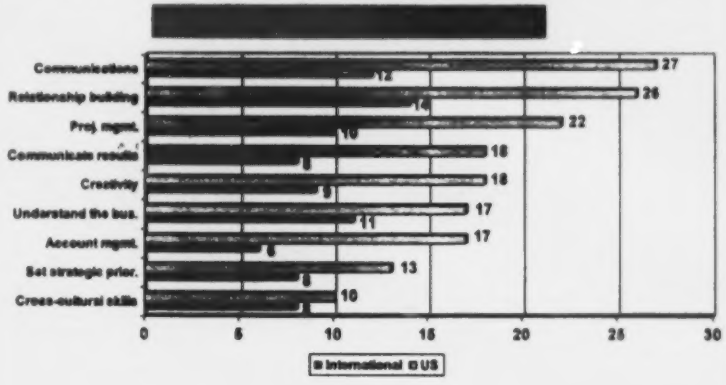
Figure 10

Most Important Lessons To Pass Along About Corporate Alliances

	US #	International #
Clearly defined roles/expectations	12	11
Get commitment/communicate with top management	9	4
Make sure you have resources to develop the program	6	6
Make sure faculty learns customer's business	6	4
Make sure faculty has expertise	6	2
Do not undercharge/entrepreneurial thinking	6	2
Make sure facility is on board/willing to deliver	6	1
Pick a small number of partners very carefully	4	3
Listen to the client	4	2
Identify a project champion in each organization	3	3

Figure 11

Importance Of Staff Skill Sets To Create Successful Alliance



There appears to be somewhat of a wide gulf between what the international schools deem important skills sets, and what the U.S. schools believe to be important. On only two skills—set strategic priorities and cross cultural skills—are they in close agreement. The skills of project management, relationship building, and communications seem far more important to U.S. schools than their international counterparts. This may be due to the collaborative nature of many U.S. alliances such as the university consortium built by Whirlpool Corp. to include Indiana University, University of Michigan, and INSEAD.

Expanding Relationships and Offerings

With the advent of new roles, new skill sets, and new approaches to delivering business education, universities are expanding their relationship with the private sector and developing new products and services for this growing market. For example, faculty working in the intensive, collaborative, custom environments that are proliferating as a result of increased alliances are behaving more like consultants, and expanding their products and services to include strategic planning and visioning, and in some cases actually attending multiple classes in corporate vision, values, and traditions in order to better understand the dynamics of the corporate partner and the challenges it faces within its industry.

Strategic planning is another expanded role being played by university partners. Faculty members sometimes attend what might otherwise be exclusively internal meetings, and even maintain an on-site presence, as well as attend courses on company values, vision, and, strategy.

New Dynamics of Alliances

As corporate/college alliances adapt to a variety of factors and become more sophisticated, the curriculum produced by these partnerships is ever more innovative and relevant to the current business climate.

The Eastman/University of Tennessee alliance produced a research project that in turn was developed into a training program that addresses the concept of what business-to-business customers value. Very little work has previously been done on customer valuation in a business-to-business context.

In the alliance between University of California-Berkeley's Haas School of Business and Case Corporation, the university developed a radically customized program and did not use faculty strictly from its own ranks; they borrowed faculty from other schools and consulting firms—wherever they could find the best, most appropriate experts.

The University of Texas, in collaboration with Andersen Consulting, has established the Center for Customer Insight and offers the world's first MBA curriculum in customer insight, with a forum for top business executive to master the latest tools.

On the learning delivery side, the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business's partnership with Germany's Daimler-Benz is an innovative example of how distance learning can bridge the gap between continents and cultures. In a 40-week program designed for Daimler-Benz's middle managers, teleconferencing and the Internet are the primary vehicles for delivery. Articles and case studies are posted on a web site (there are no textbooks), and students can E-mail works in progress and/or questions to their advisers, and have informal working sessions—also via the Internet—with that faculty member. At the end of each session, USC faculty evaluates students through E-mail quizzes and a videotaped presentation.

"Distance learning," says Wolfgang Braun, vice president of corporate executive development at Daimler-Benz, "is the only practical approach to such an alliance. Why send our people someplace else if they live and work in Germany? Many of the proposals we looked at from top universities would not have been feasible for a company based overseas. USC was flexible and creative in its approach to executive education. Their distance learning orientation was crucial in our decision to

choose them because we cannot afford to send our students away; we need them in the workplace.

"Another thing that makes distance learning the only solution for us is that the advancing technology is really driving costs down, so the prices you pay for videoconferencing and the Internet now are marginal in comparison to travel costs and course costs, especially if you can lecture to 20 people at a time as we do. Distance learning is not only practical for us, it represents the kind of thinking we must instill within our employee population to meet our business goals: if you want to work on a global scale, you have to become independent of time and geography."

Distance learning is becoming an important component of many corporate/college alliances primarily for the reasons cited by Braun. Becoming "independent of time and geography" is necessary for doing business on a global scale, so it logically follows that teaching business education in a similar context warrants the same access to and mastery of the appropriate technologies.

Other examples abound of innovative programs that stem from the new breed of alliances and the intermingling of computers and classrooms. This is an inevitable consequence of the integration of executive education into the very core of a corporation's learning organization. Broad and sweeping change is inevitable when the individual roles of the alliance partners are redefined and redeployed.

The "1998 Survey of Global Education Best Practices" revealed that corporate/college alliances are growing in their sophistication and becoming more powerful tools for effecting organization-wide change while providing crucial business solutions. Each new alliance seems like another step toward redefining and honing the very concept of the corporate/university partnership. It's no coincidence that the level of collaboration is on rise just as the global economic climate is increasingly lucrative, endlessly fascinating, and volatile as ever.

Participating Schools in the 1998 Survey

Domestic

University of Phoenix

University of Tennessee at Knoxville

Yale University

University of Michigan

University of Texas

University of California at Berkeley

University of N. Texas

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Arizona State University

University of Washington

Babson College

Penn State University

Thunderbird–American Graduate School of International Management

Case Western Reserve University

UCLA

Washington University

Northwestern University

Ohio State University

Edwin L. Cox School of Business

Boston College

Emory University

Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute

Duke University

Dartmouth College

Texas A&M University

University of Minnesota

New York University

Indiana University

University of N.C. at Chappel Hill

Boston University

International

IMD–International Institute for Management Development - Switzerland

USW–Universitätsseminarder Wirtschaft - Germany

IESE–International Graduate School of Management - Spain

Theseus Institute - France

Groupe ESSEC - France

INSEAD - France

Erasmus Graduate School of Business - Rotterdam School of Management - Netherlands

International Management Insttitute St. Petersburg - Russia

IFL - Swedish Institute of Management - Sweden

IEDC International Executive Development Center - Slovenia

AIT Asian Institute of Technology - Thailand

London Business School - UK

Henley Management College - UK

Cranfield School of Management - UK

Ashridge School of Management - UK

Consorzio MIB - Italy

Asian Institute of Management - Philippines

Ulcrich School voor Manuyement - Belgium

CEIBS - China

"Why Are We Educators?"

Catharine R. Stimpson
Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Science, New York University

I admire the resolute way in which the conference is taking up crucial issues and the admirable way in which the conference is supporting innovation for a range of institutions. I, too, believe that innovation is a source of strength—even though I sometimes wonder if and when all of us will summon the strength for innovation. Actually, innovation is more than a source of strength, but a source of survival. Paradoxically, I will speak about tradition as well as innovation, and do so because I am concerned about our values as educators. What values should our innovations represent? What values do our traditions represent that we should maintain? If we know what our values are, we can then answer the question, "Why are we educators?[1]

In 1977, Adrienne Rich finished her poem "Natural Resources," which then appeared in her collection *The Dream of a Common Language* (Rich, 1978). At once despairing and hopeful, the poem's last lines are:

1 Versions of this speech were given at a plenary session of an American Association for Higher Education meeting, San Diego, January 18, 1997; as the Draper Lecture, New York University, April 17, 1997; at the annual fall conference, University Faculty Senate, City University of New York, November 21, 1997; at the annual convocation, Holy Cross College, January 20, 1998; at the conference "New Millenium, New Humanities?," SUNY/Stony Brook, March 28, 1998; and at an Association of Departments of English seminar, Oakbrook, IL, July 6–9, 1998

My heart is moved by all I cannot save:
so much has been destroyed

I have to cast my lot with those
who age after age, perversely,

with no extraordinary power,
reconstitute the world.

Throughout my career as an educator, I have cast my lot with change and innovation. I have cast my lot with those who have hoped to reconstitute the world. I have called for, sought, and fought for change.

However, this career has also made me ultimately suspicious of retailing wholesale changes. I cannot pitch revolution easily. There are things in education worth saving. There are things that education must save. My paper will reveal this dual commitment to change and conservation. More specifically, I will focus on a values-charged covenant into which post-modern educators must enter. The concept of a covenant is old. The nature of the covenant into which post-modern educators must enter mingles old and new.

I have arrived at my convictions about this covenant pragmatically. That is, I have tested received educational values against educational experience. I have then used educational experience as a generative matrix for educational values. I now wish to outline five passages of my life during which I have tested values against experience, experience against values. They are my education within the family; my education as an undergraduate; my education as a young educator; my education in a job away from education; and finally, my education as a great godmother. I hope you will forgive me for my presumption in suggesting that my life might help to document the vital essentialities of connections among change, conservation, and covenants.[2]

2 This address is compatible with a brief recent essay of mine, "The Public Duties of Our Profession," which outlines a professor's responsibilities as well, with special reference to languages and literature (Stimpson, 1996)

Of course, of changes post-modern society has a wild plethora. Indeed, writers and educators have created a cottage industry —more accurately a chateau industry — in describing the changes modern and post-modern societies are experiencing. Despite this industry, many people I know are insufficiently awestruck by what is happening. We are so busy managing change, coping with change, or resisting change that we have largely lost our capacity for wonder. But think of them: A white, professional woman, I drafted this address on a personal computer in New York City. When done, the draft was faxed to a friend 717 miles away for an instant response. Although pleased to have had a personal computer and a fax machine for the last decade or so, I am aware that many of my students are far more digitalized than I. I am behind their learning curve. So positioned, I am symptomatic of the weakness of many members of my generation of the professoriate.

Elsewhere in the great multiculturalism of New York, my workplace, all human races and ethnicities were alive and alert. Self and Others were having a ton of encounter sessions—some bloody, most workable. In urban laboratories, medical researchers were mapping the human brain and engineering animal and vegetable genes. Some of these researchers, like most of the students enrolled in the huge New York public university system, were wondering how they would ever finance their continued learning. Circulating around us all were jet streams of global capital and, circulating hundreds of miles above all of this were American astronauts and Russian cosmonauts in a common space station.

The more anxious among us argue that we have too many changes. Others of us are more confident. For the most part, I belong to the party of confidence. Yet I believe we badly need a covenant with which to frame, shape, and judge change. But what is this thing, a "covenant?" Like the word "education," the word "covenant" is highly charged. It has solemn implications and serious connotations. Some of these meanings are theological. A covenant refers to God's promises to man and to the promises church members make to each other to defend the

church's beliefs. Other meanings are legal. A covenant is a binding agreement among two or more parties. The use alone of such a word in relation to higher education signifies my belief in higher education's solemnities and dignity. This dignity and these solemnities manage to persist despite our shenanigans and antics. This dignity and these solemnities must also rebuke the increasing and increasingly misleading references to higher education as "an industry"—as if administrators were only corporate executives, faculty only a work force, knowledge a product called content, and students nothing but consumers.

Recently, Stanley N. Katz, the past president of the American Council of Learned Societies talked about American higher education and covenants (Katz, 1996). Higher education in the United States, he remarked rightly, has never spoken with one voice. It is instead "a system of systems, each of which responds to different publics. There is no 'general public' for higher education any more than there is a 'general reader' for a particular book." Because of this, higher education is not a monolithic party that can enter into a binding agreement with a second equally monolithic party.

Nevertheless, Katz suggests, we must explore a covenant for higher education. Echoing Katz, I would claim that we in higher education can live with both an overarching covenant that unites us and the diversities that enrich and differentiate us. That is, institutions and groups can share a large sense of mission, and simultaneously, each can have a mission of their own. Similarly, we can all agree about some of the meanings of a particular book. For example, unless we are being cute cut-ups, we would all agree that *King Lear* is about power. However, each of us might stress a different theme, foreground a different meaning.

If we do think about the possibilities of such an overarching covenant for higher education, we can revise historical practices—among them those of the Puritans (yes, the Puritans). Katz explains that they "imagined human beings as engaged simultaneously in two distinctive contractual relationships—the covenant between God and the individual, and the covenant

us, quite unnecessarily. Nor, I would add, equally unnecessarily, are many of us explicit Puritans. Nevertheless, the Puritan imagining of a double covenant can be a metaphor for us today. Katz argues that educators have entered into two simultaneous contracts, one with our students and one with society-at-large. As educators, we "can enable students to save themselves." If we do so, we "can serve the larger society."

Katz's concept of the double covenant has influenced my thinking. However, I offer two friendly amendments. First, higher education serves society in ways other than teaching students—essential though this is. We also serve through making our discoveries, creations, and inventions; through cultivating arts, sciences, languages, and literatures; through stirring and sustaining public discourse, through nurturing historical memories; and through professional training. Doing all this, we are crucial to society, because, as H. G. Wells rightly remarked, "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." In turn, society, for its part, supports and legitimates us. We must not underestimate the importance of these acts of legitimization. For they render the degrees we give credible and legal. Without the ability to award credible, legal degrees, higher education would not exist as a formal, public, viable system of systems.

My second friendly amendment is this: we should enter—not simply into a double—but into three linked covenants, in brief, into a triple covenant. Educators also need a morally binding contract with each other as well as with their students and society. Educators have obligations **to help each other** fulfill their covenant with our students and society-at-large. For example, when public institutions are under attack, private institutions should defend them. If educators act on these obligations to help each other, we will reward engagements with the daily life and shared governance of our institutions more generously and justly.

But what should the contents be of this triple covenant with our students, society, and each other? Let me turn to the five selected

the daily life and shared governance of our institutions more generously and justly.

But what should the contents be of this triple covenant with our students, society, and each other? Let me turn to the five selected passages of my life, raw material from which to design a triple covenant.

The first took place well before I entered college. It was within my family, the entangled community of learning we call childhood. For my parents, especially my mother, passionately entered into a particular covenant with their children. Because my siblings and I were children, we did not know how strong and binding this covenant was until well after we had become its beneficiaries. Obviously, the parental covenant mattered to us as children, but it also mattered to education as a system. For my family was a domestic community of learning that taught us to respect formal, public communities of learning.

My parents made two explicit promises: first, that education would matter to our growth and well-being—spiritually, intellectually, socially, and materially; and second, that as parents they would provide the security and support we needed in order to be educated to the fullest extent of our desires and competencies. Once, as a child, I leaned my chin on my mother's ironing board and said, "I want to go East to one of those women's colleges." I had, I believe, read about them in *Life Magazine*. "You will, darling, you will," my mother said. She and my father kept this second promise. They read to us; they provided music lessons; they drove us to Seattle, the nearest big city, to see touring productions of Shakespeare; they paid college bills unstintingly, without complaint; they traveled 3000 miles to see me graduate from one of those Eastern women's colleges. In brief, the parental covenant—an enormous privilege— was to so raise their children that the children could enter into higher education's covenant with students.

A lesson from this first passage: A family's covenant with a child can educate the child for education. In turn, higher education must persuade families that we know what we are doing and that

it is right for families to direct their children to higher education. This may create an irony for many families, no less painful for being well-known. That is, higher education may provide the social mobility that will take a student away from her or his family. However, even if a university degree challenges filial pieties, it need not destroy all filial affections. Carol Sicherman's letter, "Reaching Out to Alumni," succinctly reminds us that many students are themselves parents with heavy family responsibilities (Sicherman, 1997).

The second selected passage was my experience as an undergraduate in a liberal arts college. My education did much more than permit me to save myself. If we were resilient enough, my classmates and I were encouraged to **create** ourselves as grown-ups who were capable of change as circumstances, temperament, and will might dictate. I learned many things at college, both inside and outside of the classroom. Some of the most important lessons were in a small, smoke-stained, smoke-stenched room over the arched entry way of a residence hall, a room not surprisingly called "The Smoker." There wildly sophisticated young women from New York City talked about subways and Chopin, race relations and Karl Marx.

A lesson of these lessons, the metalesson if you will, was that the guardians of a community of learning also enter into a covenant about learning with students and then keep to its terms. The overarching covenant of this college was to serve liberal learning. Its local inflection was to educate young women strenuously, without apologies, without pandering, without condescension, with rigor. To be sure, many of the young women joked about the covenant. Nor did it keep us from anxiety attacks, flailings about, and post-adolescent errors. But the sturdiness of the covenant made us feel valuable.

Moreover, the institution was an institution. No doubt, there were quarrels, strains, multiple infidelities, and acrimonies aplenty in the corridors of administrative and faculty power. Nevertheless, through rituals and everyday actions, the administration and faculty seemed a special body. The most memorable faculty

wanted the covenant to work and cared, not only about logic and rigor, but enthusiastically about learning in general. In her autobiographical essays, *A Life In School: What the Teacher Learned*, Jane Tompkins, who attended the same college as I did, speaks for me, "The teachers who made the most difference to me were the ones who loved their subjects and didn't hide it." They also respected intellectual tradition and assumed that young women could study Western intellectual traditions as well as any man. Indeed, we were required to do so. We read the pre-Socrates philosophers, Plato, Aristotle. Whether we painted our fingernails or not, we took at least one laboratory science course, dissecting animals or scraping at minerals in the gentle mountains of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Learning an intellectual tradition, learning science despite my literary inclinations, made me uncomfortable. It all unsettled and baffled me. I got headaches; I wept and was homesick. This was not because Plato and Descartes and my geology teacher were men. It was because learning can be hard, knotty, difficult, demanding. It was because I was away from home. But when I was done, I had changed. I was changed. Paradoxically, learning the old taught me to see the world anew. I was far more prepared for a complicated world. I was far more ready to approach the "rooted cosmopolitanism," to borrow Kwame Anthony Appiah's lovely and sufficient phrase, that must be an aim of higher education. in a democratic, multicultural world. I was also psychologically more poised, with (I hope) some of the openness and empathy that enables a person to be moved by all that one cannot save and yet wish to reconstitute the world.

A lesson from this second passage: Part of education's covenant with students is to enable them to change. Paradoxically, knowing history and intellectual traditions is a tool for creating change by students and faculty alike. A school keeps all of its covenants well when it is clear, dignified, and purposeful about the meaning of being a school.

My college training, far more than my graduate training, gave me the intellectual capital necessary for my third selected passage: my life as a young educator. I tried to teach as I had been taught—with as much respect for my students, rigor, logic, and enthusiasm as possible. I was too young and unwise to be my students' "wise friend," a role that a recent book about higher education recommends (Willimon and Naylor, 1995). But I was not too young and unwise to be their teacher—to talk about the rosebuds and worms of *Billy Budd*; to read their papers and persuade them of the virtues of a good prose style; to walk into a classroom with the conviction that within its staid walls culture and conversations would flourish, students would grow, I would grow, and chaos would be stayed.

In brief, I entered into a covenant with my students and trusted they would eventually want to join me there. In this action, I was a traditional follower of my own teachers. My students' part of the contract was to believe that being educated mattered. Not only would it matter economically—although it does, it does matter very much indeed.[3] Being educated would matter morally, intellectually, psychologically. Being educated would help students create their own humanity. Finally, being educated would prove, yet again, the bedrock truth of Aristotle's opening sentence in "Metaphysics": "All men (and women) by nature desire to know (Aristotle, 1947).

However, as a young educator, I also became a passionate advocate of change. This becoming and jolting event happened during my first teaching job. I was hired as a lecturer at a private women's college associated with the large, private, urban university where I was a graduate student. Ultimately, I was to teach at this college for seventeen years until I moved to a very

3 Indeed, this has proved to be the case. In 1993, a person with a high school degree had a mean monthly income of $1400—if they had an income at all, while a person with a bachelor's degree had a mean monthly income of $2600—if they had an income at all. Reynolds (1997) reinforces the connection between higher education and economic well-being.

large, public research university.[4] In the late sixties, I threw myself into the then-tiny movement of women's studies, that witches' coven. A fervent goal of most people in women's studies was to "transform" all of education. I, however, always conjoined the Utopian hope of transformation with the belief that women's studies would bring the academy, not to its knees but to its senses and better self.

The ideas, politics, and practices of women's studies are fluid and contested. However, the founding principles of women's studies that I treasure provide blueprints and beams for a usable covenant. Moreover, women's studies provides a compelling case study of institutional renewal. In his wise book about orderly change, Gardner (1981) talks about institutional self-renewal.

Doing so, he contrasts institutional deadwood and seedbeds. Seedbeds, he argues, flourish in institutions that believe in pluralism. They have many decision-making points, many channels of information, many roles for individuals, and many points-of-view. Such pluralistic institutions cultivate seedbeds, many "new ideas, new ways of doing things, new approaches." Women's studies has both planted and flowered from seedbeds.

Though people in the early days of women's studies often badmouthed and whined about each other, we **felt** part of a group. We rightly rejected the myth of the solitary genius. Not only did we know too many solitary geniuses whose helpmates had helped them behind a self-effacing guise of mate. We were aware that teaching and learning is the encounter of the existentially single mind with others and other worlds.

Our autonomy bolstered by our sense of community, we called for a new pedagogy, a connected classroom. This classroom might also be wired, but its primary connections are a vibrant

4 Significantly, it was a land-grant university. These institutions provide a now-established model of public service that people outside of the land-grants often ignore.

network of learning among the teachers who are there to teach and learn; the students who are there to learn and teach; and the material that is there to be engaged for the sake of the reconstitution of self and society. Moreover, women's studies called for an accessible classroom. A college is not a gated community, but a welcoming community. A university is not a gated community, but a cluster of welcoming communities for those with and without extraordinary power.

In terms of institutional governance, women's studies insisted upon both democratic practices and security. The citizens of educational communities are to be free to help create and govern these communities. They are also to be free from harassment, insults, and violence. In terms of research and curricula, women's studies, or so I have often argued (Stimpson, Winter 1996), works with three great sets of ideas: first, the destructive differences between men and women, the invidiousness of gender structures; second, the constructive differences women have made in culture and society; and third, the differences among women—differences that race, age, nationality, class, and other conditions breed.

Correctly expanded, the study of the many differences among women invigorated the studies of the individual and group differences among people. In turn, this has had enormous consequences for:

- questions of pedagogy (How does one usefully create a diverse classroom?);
- questions of access (How does one provide enough education for everyone in a diverse, unequal society?);
- questions of governance (How do we create a democratic, secure, and diverse community?); and
- questions of ideas and learning (How can our disciplines be deep enough, accurate enough, broad enough? How can they change so that they will be deep, accurate, and broad?)

For me, women's studies was, and is, an adventure. Like all adventures, it was, and is, exhilarating and perilous. It both fuelled and almost derailed my career as a young educator. For my work in women's studies, combined with local political conditions and my peculiar graces and charms, led to a long, difficult tenure fight. If it had not been for people who actively defended me, for better or worse, I would not be in academic life today. It was a very close shave.

My tenure "struggle" taught me everything that was wrong about tenure. Tenure decisions can be capricious, arbitrary, biased, and manipulated. Tenure decisions can be made by tenured faculty who are smug, lazy, mean, drunk, out-of-date in their scholarship and research, and legally secure in their incompetence. One consequence of the imbecilic dismantling of mandatory retirement for faculty members is to keep such destructive fools in their posts. I also understand why people without job security should look askance at people with it. If I were an employee of AT&T in New Jersey who was laid off with nearly 40,000 other employees, I would question paying the nice salary of a tenured professor at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Despite all this, I believe in tenure. It must be a genuine possibility for faculty members, especially if tenured faculty members are prepared to keep tenure from being the refuge of slackers, goof-offs, and predators. I am only too aware of the difficulties of the current job market, but abolishing tenure will not improve this market. On the contrary, it will make it even worse. Without tenure, the academic workplace would be helpless before mischievous political forces, bureaucratic calculations, and short-term enrollment trends.

At the risk of resembling a conservationist defending an endangered species, I affirm that that tenure does protect academic freedom and the ability to say unconventional, uncomfortable, and controversial things. I was outspoken before getting tenure; I have been more outspoken about ideas and institutional governance after tenure. I have watched good people with good ideas who lack tenure in their work place censor

themselves. They worry about what their supervisor might think. They ask what might happen in their upcoming performance review. Self-censoring, they feel stifled, perhaps a little self-contemptuous, angry. Their environment loses their good ideas and commitment.

Moreover, in general, doing creative teaching and learning over a period of time takes both stability and stimulus. Too little stability drains the energy that creative work entails. Too little stimulus hardens the arteries of thought and imagination. Tenure or its equivalent provides stability. Change—whether we generate it or it happens to us—provides the stimulus. To the taxpayers, families, and students who have picked up my academic salary and whose economic situation is far more precarious than mine, I want to make a statement that is a part of my covenant with them. "Yes, my tenure is a privilege. I am grateful to you for providing it. In turn, I will work as hard as I can for you and your kids. If I say something that seems wrong to you, that seems stupid or unpatriotic or blasphemous, I will try and explain my reasons for saying it. And I will not conceive of tenure as a right reserved for a handful of people with hotshot credentials. Rather, academic tenure should provide a model for a decent work place."

A lesson from this third passage: An institution is responsible both for sustaining traditions and creating intellectual and pedagogical change. The covenant of educators with each other is to respect this dual responsibility. Only if educators meet both obligations can it fulfill its covenants with students and society. Tenure is a test of a faculty's ability to manage a triple covenant. Power (1997) presents an especially cogent discussion of academic freedom and its relations to professional responsibilities.

The conviction of my defense of tenure increased during my education on a job away from education. For nearly four years, from 1994 through 1997, though I continued to teach, I also held a unique job at a foundation that awards fellowships (the MacArthur Fellowships) to exceptionally creative people. This

48

permitted me to think about creativity in general as well as about individuals. By definition, creative people change things. They not only upset apple carts. They not only redesign apple carts. They ask if you can have an apple cart without a horse or if apples need carts at all. Doing so, they destabilize the customs of a community. Doing **this**, they make people grumpy and uneasy. The flexible, pragmatic community copes with discomfort, sorting out the destructive drum-beater of ego and/or pathology from the constructive marcher to a different drum. The inflexible community expels, marginalizes, or punishes the restless spirit who will ultimately give the community a larger life and rest.

Only a churl or a nutcase would complain about holding the job I held. Among its many virtues was that it taught me again about the necessity of hope. I now often talk to individuals and groups about exceptionally creative people, their singular visions, the courage and persistence they have shown in translating their visions into tangible accomplishments, I see the effect that my representations of creativity have. These representations do not make less creative people feel jealous or small. On the contrary, they gain hope in the amazing changes that creative people can make in our lives. Recently, I was speaking to a college classroom in a comprehensive public university in upstate New York. Although the subject of the class was creativity, the students had never heard of the MacArthur Foundation nor of its Fellowships. I talked a little about the importance of foundations for civil society and a lot about the MacArthur Fellows. The students caught the fire in the lives of Fellows. They began to tell me about people they knew who could be Fellows. Tutored in human possibility, the students became its tutors and fans.

A second virtue of taking a brief time-out from academic life was the chance to see ourselves, we in higher education, as others see us. Obviously, the picture varies according to the beholder and her/his relationship to higher education. A consistent feature, however, has been its self-contradictions. On the one hand, we are envied. Higher education today has assumed such a defensive posture in the "culture wars" and is so consumed with its own failings and difficulties and challenges that this envy may seem

strange. But people say again and again how gratifying it must be to work in higher education; how gratifying it must be to do something valuable; how gratifying it must be to work with students and ideas; how satisfying to be able to think about things. On the other hand, even to those who do not buy into the stereotype of the other-worldly, absent-minded professor, we in higher education seem naive. Many of us lack a firm sense of realism about the financial and political ways of the world, and, emboldened by vanity about our intelligence, we refuse to learn that we must learn. Others, whose vanity is that they have learned about the world, droop with world-weary cynicism. Whether we are true naifs or self-deluded cynics, we are gabby. We talk and write as if the mere acts of talking and writing would magically change the stubborn nodes and nubs of the world.

Our naiveté, our faux cynicism, and our verbosity all damage our capacity for instilling a sense of hope in our students, society, and, I suspect, in ourselves. For our naiveté renders our hopeful recommendations for social, cultural, or intellectual change seem drippily Utopian; our faux cynicism renders us impotent as purveyors of realistic recommendations for social, cultural, or intellectual change; and our verbosity, our verbosity, our verbosity is simply a major turn-off.

A lesson from this fourth passage: A commitment to hope in education and human events ought to be part of our triple covenant. Hope and change are partners. Hope promises that change will come and that it will come beneficially. Educators—through vanity—can be their own worst enemies in acting as hopeful creatures of a triple covenant.

My fifth and final passage is brief: Last spring I received an e-mail from my goddaughter, now living with her blended family on the West Coast. She wanted to tell me about her daughter Stephanie, specifically about Stephanie's graduation from kindergarten. Each of the children was to say what he or she wanted to become. Like the other parents, my goddaughter waited anxiously for her child to speak. What if the child were to

freeze? Say nothing? Or, alternatively, what if the child were to sound stupid or silly? To say, for example, "I want to be three again." Then Stephanie stepped forward, "I want to be an astronaut," she said. My goddaughter sat back in relief. Stephanie continued, "And I want to be a ballerina." My goddaughter sat up in pride. And then Stephanie ended, with a flourish, "And I want to know everything there is to know in the world." "That's my girl," my goddaughter declared to herself ebulliently. "That's my girl." And, I echoed, exuberant over my e-mail, "That's my girl, too."

The lesson from this fifth passage: at heart our triple covenant insists on the beauty and importance of a child who wants to rocket into space, and to play the Sugar Plum Fairy, and to know everything there is to know in the world. And, this insisting heart goes on, it is our life-long mission to design rockets, to map the cosmos, to choreograph a dance, and to seek to know everything there is in the world.

Perhaps the act of writing a triple covenant—with our students, with the society that supports us, and with each other—will lessen our naiveté, faux cynicism, and clouds of inglorious rhetoric. If such an act of writing does not have this desirable outcome, not much harm will be done. For our covenants should be large enough to survive these blemishes. Writing these covenants will demand changes from those of us who make a living from higher education. There are changes to be explored and made in our roles; there are changes to be explored and made in our rewards; there are changes to be made in our hardware and software.

Changing roles, rewards, hardware and software all matter, but they must also exist within a triple covenant, pledges that embody animating, sustaining, sustained values. These values are hardly novelties. We can constitute a covenant by reconstituting values that lie scattered throughout history and our harried lives.

What values has this truncated portfolio assessment of my experiences contained? One section has been about the value of interweaving various communities of learning; another about the value of history and traditions in understanding change; another about the value of intellectual freedom; another about the value of recognizing human dignity and connections in education; another about the necessity of equity; another about the value of multiplicity of perspectives and ideas; another about the value of hope. If there is a binder to these sections, it is this: the triple covenant of those of us who make our livings at education is that we will enhance the rugged, stumbling, beautiful, necessary powers of education to make a life. To make a life? More accurately, to make and remake a life, to make and remake a world.

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Serving an Increasingly Adult Student Population

Lessons from Nordstrom and Wal Mart in the Restructuring of Higher Education

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As we look at service to students, I would like to share what we at University of Maryland University College (UMUC), an adult higher education institution, have learned so far on the way to succeeding or not succeeding in an age of consumerism.

A confession at the outset: For a university that has specialized in non-traditional students for more than 50 years, UMUC until recently was not very far out-of-the-box in its approach to the delivery of student services. Perhaps this conservativeness reflects the defensive posture of an "evening college" that serves principally adult students. We knew that traditional academia would be looking down its nose at us, and we wanted to be sure we did everything exactly as traditional institutions did, including driving students crazy at times by not paying attention to their creature needs.

Following are some how-to's that UMUC has learned and would like to highlight. Though much of what I say applies equally to graduate students, my focus is on undergraduate students.

1. How to let students know we recognize, honor, and accommodate the life situations of busy adults

We start with the premise that there is nothing second-rate or second-class about being an adult going back to school. Today we are seeing a new acceptance of lifelong learning as a cultural value and a recognition of the rapid obsolescence of skills and knowledge acquired in formal schooling. Now not only are collegiate institutions committed to the principle of lifetime learning, but many of the businesses and organizations that employ our adult student clientele also state lifelong learning to be a company value. Add another premise that UMUC is a competitor in the higher education marketplace and needs to attract and retain students in order to succeed.

As we look at the how-to's, the Nordstrom and Wal Mart analogy came readily to mind because both are places where you shop, and we know that adult students are savvy comparison shoppers. A few decades ago adult students had to look hard to find a reputable college or university to accommodate their schedules. Now in most urban areas and medium-sized cities adults have an array of institutions from which to choose. To compete effectively, and to do a good job for our students, UMUC seeks to integrate the best attributes of these two department store chains on opposite ends of the retail spectrum.

Nordstrom, as most shoppers know, has classy merchandise, usually a live piano being played on the premises, and a deserved reputation for exemplary customer service. UMUC wants to be classy, and wants to be perceived by its student clientele as classy. We know our academic programs must be topnotch. We know that adults who have been at work all day long don't want to scrunch their adult bodies into wooden schoolroom desks in a dirty classroom. In some locations UMUC can't avoid offering only such an alternative, but where we possibly can we offer comfortable chairs and desks in pleasant rooms with carpeted floors. And, like Nordstrom, we try to exemplify in all of our transactions with students a "customer first" philosophy.

Turning now to Wal Mart: Is there possibly anyone in the audience who hasn't experienced or, with the aid of a vivid imagination, doesn't know what a Wal Mart is all about? It's that store where you can't park within a half-mile of the entrance, where you are in very real danger of being trampled in the aisles by fellow customers, and where you are lucky if the clerk knows how to operate the cash register. But the values! I would not dream of not walking the half-mile when my list of needed household supplies is long enough, and I know many of you will do the same. Like Wal Mart, UMUC wants to offer students the best deal we can at the lowest possible tuition.

As for that customer service, customer-first thing, have you ever experienced the merchandise return counter at Wal Mart? It is anything but a model of customer service. And guess where, at UMUC, we found our customer service goals to be most tested and, to be candid, to at times totally break down? In transactions to do with student accounts and financial aid. In disputes or misunderstandings involving money, students are demanding and at times unreasonable, and staff members' ability to keep smiling wears thin.

Let me mention two of the features UMUC has considered key to offering Nordstrom quality at Wal Mart prices: (1) wide dissemination of information about UMUC through print and Web publications, as well as other media; and (2) automated access to UMUC and multiple entry points. As both an online and direct classroom education provider, UMUC makes everything about us accessible to the student either by Web, telephone, print media, or in person. We hold open houses three times a year at our major classroom sites. We admit and register in person, by touchtone, or by Web. Everything about being admitted, selecting classes, registering, obtaining support services and library access, and getting grades is available from the comfort of the student's living room at home or from the workplace whether the home or workplace is in Bethesda, Maryland or Yuma, Arizona.

2. How to not make students stand in line

UMUC seeks to meet the student more than halfway, to extend services to the student—sometimes even before the student asks for the service—rather than make the student come to us. This goal is accomplished through a decentralized service organization. UMUC is decentralized departmentally, geographically, and with respect to degree level. "Stand in line" is meant figuratively to include any form of delay in the process of receiving services, and the objective is no hassle and reducing the cost of engagement for the student.

Avoiding delays for students means setting high expectations for staff customer-friendliness and enforcing these expectations. We ask our staff not only to meet their own goals but also to monitor the performance of one another. Avoiding delays also means ongoing mid-course adjustments to improve process flow. We constantly watch processes, adjust structures to reduce logjams and barriers, and we make this vigilance everyone's responsibility. Recently, for example, we restructured the process for transcript evaluation when we realized we had a backlog, and we restructured the processing of admission applications to achieve our target of 24–hour turnaround.

3. How to not pass students around

A one-stop, team-based service delivery model for local, regional, and distance students is what UMUC implemented in order to not "pass students around" by requiring them to visit a different department for each separate service they need. Two-and-a-half years ago UMUC launched its team-based student services organization through the creation of one-stop service teams whose mission is to provide a full range of services to students in person, by phone, and on email/Web, serving students both locally and students at-a-distance in other parts of the United States and throughout the world.

The UMUC undergraduate student body is served by eight student resource teams, four located at UMUC headquarters in College Park, Maryland, handling local and distance students, and four at various regional locations in Maryland and the national capital area. Resource teams made up of multi-skilled staff offer students as complete a line of services as we can manage: admission, registration, academic counseling and transcript evaluation, financial aid intake, career counseling, and services for veterans and disabled students.

Resource teams, each named after a water body in the State of Maryland (e.g. Chesapeake Team, Potomac Team), are supported by several other teams: an Operations Team and a Process Team to carry out "back room" functions associated with financial aid, admission, registration, transcript, and grade processing transactions; an Information Team for handling prospective students; an Enrollment Team for student intake; and a Staff Support Team made up of director-level staff who provide the technical expertise and guidance from which the other teams draw.

UMUC began as long as four years ago to lay the groundwork for putting a team-based organization in place, and we are still working on several of our processes and structures. The design of the organization relied heavily on a state-of-the-art student information system, which UMUC has yet to procure after the vendor originally selected went out of business and cost us a delay of several years. We are trying to make the organization work with a cobbled-together legacy student system. Briefly, some lessons we have learned in the process of creating our student services team organization and making it run are these:

- We made a mistake in attempting to deploy, from the outset, a team that was both multi-skilled and self-directed. We would have been wiser to develop the multiple skills of team members, allow the teams to mature, and later mentor the teams to become self-directed.
- We underestimated, for some of our incumbent staff, the difficulty of the transition from being a specialist in one

kind of student service to "multi-tasking." The new role and expectations were unwelcome to several staff.

- We learned, the hard way, that a totally decentralize approach to financial aid processing does not work. We nearly went through meltdown, would not have survived a federal audit, and, we later learned, were being watched with expressions of horror by our colleagues in the financial aid community during our attempts to make financial aid completely team-based. Today, we expect our resource team members to start their student clients out on financial aid processing, but the packaging and follow-on transactions take place in one of our backroom teams.

- We didn't understand at first that people who pursue a career in student counseling may not like to do, or be good at, all of the functions required of an effective "service rep." After experiencing alarming turnover of team members, we addressed the problem by changing the wording in our job postings for resource team members and adjusting our employment screening to seek new staff who would be comfortable with the broader duties required of team members.

- We did not anticipate and fully recognize what a mammoth amount of training, both initial and ongoing, would be required to prepare and sustain team members. We now are at work on a Web-based system that will augment direct training and mentoring with individualized, self-paced training. Similarly, we are belatedly getting our arms around the requirements for effective performance monitoring.

At the end of the four years since inception of the plan, including two-and-a-half years of implementation, we are battle-weary but optimistic that we are making our team organization work to achieve UMUC's Nordstrom aspirations.

4. How to not make students engage in wasted motions on their way to earning degrees

Finally, let me mention two other student-serving innovations UMUC has either brilliantly thought of, stumbled on, or backed into. The first is interdepartmental cooperation through UEM—Undergraduate Enrollment Management.

Sometimes, as you well know, the disconnects that cause poor service for students occur at the interface between two or more separate departments in the institution. In UMUC's case, the problem junction point was that between the instructional delivery unit, a huge monster of a department called Undergraduate Programs (UGP), and our Student Services unit, also monstrous in size.

As is not the case with most colleges and universities. At UMUC, UGP and its counterpart, our Graduate School, are responsible for what is usually called student recruitment. The undergraduate and graduate schools carry out all of the marketing and fulfillment that bring our students to the door, literally, or, in the case of online programs, virtually.

Student Services, however, is responsible for **keeping** students once they get to the door. You can forecast the perils and pitfalls of this arrangement even before I say more. UGP would forget to notify Student Services of a direct mailing to 30,000 residents, or a radio campaign, and Student Services might be slammed, as they say in the restaurant trade, with a sudden, unexpected influx of prospective students—all wanting preliminary transcript evaluation, one of the most time-consuming of transactions with students or potential students. Conversely, Student Services might forget to notify Undergraduate Programs that there was a hitch in grade processing at the end of fall semester, causing students to register late for spring semester because they haven't gotten their fall grades yet. Or, more generally, UGP might justifiably carp at Student Services because UGP had just spent several bucks per head getting a prospective student to pick up the phone and call to find out all about UMUC, only to have that

prospect turned off because of a five-minute wait in a Student Services telephone queue.

In order to **get connected** and smooth out that critical interface between their units, UGP and Student Services together created a process called Undergraduate Enrollment Management (UEM). UEM is co-managed by one of the heads of Student Services and the marketing director of UGP, and it focuses on the Information and Enrollment Teams of Student Services, those units with which prospective students have their first contacts. Within the two teams, we have put in place dual reporting of key players to UGP and Student Services, and UGP and Student Services work together on all phases of recruitment and retention, from student intake to open houses to the student newsletter. The co-managers of UEM meet regularly and include other staff integral to the UEM process.

The second student-serving, motion-saving innovation is UMUC's alliances with feeder community colleges in the state. The State of Maryland has a well-developed system of more than 20 public community colleges. Since UMUC is principally an upper-division transfer and graduate institution, we have through the years had close relationships with the state community colleges from which many of our students come.

Beginning in the fall of 1997, UMUC strengthened ties with our closest community college partners by launching a partnership called the Alliance with each of the colleges. The Alliance, capital A, is a program articulation relationship writ large; a step beyond 2+2. Not only do UMUC and its community college partner interlock our curricula to provide a through-program to the bachelor's degree, but we also offer joint admission through the Alliance. A student at Charles County Community College in Maryland can fill out one application for admission and simultaneously be admitted to both CCCC and UMUC. The Alliance focuses on the adult, part-time student. Though the new Alliance student progressing to a bachelor's degree may not enroll in UMUC's 300- and 400-level courses for a few years after being admitted, he or she is nevertheless a UMUC student

after completing the Alliance admission and will receive UMUC mailings and have access to our counselors even while stilled enrolled in the community college. To date UMUC has an Alliance with five community colleges in Maryland, with a total of over a thousand students admitted, and is in the process of adding more Alliance partners.

Summing Up

Students are consumers, customers, clients, people we are proud to serve and who make meaningful the lives of higher education careerists. UMUC's lesson from Wal Mart has been to give good value for the money and to make all of our products and services available in one place. Our lesson from Nordstrom has been to excel in the giving of service to our clients, to have a top-quality academic product while keeping it as close as we can to the Wal Mart price, and to provide the amenities that please our clients when they come to us.

Our bottom-line lesson has been, over the past few years, that none of our goals in student services and student retention can be met if we have not first attended to the needs of our internal clients, our own staff, our UMUC teams. Team members must buy into the goals, receive the training and support required to do their jobs, and be told when they are doing a good job and how they can improve when they are not. The successful motivation and maintenance of topnotch student services professionals is a challenge, and UMUC is still at work on it.

Faculty Leadership in Assessment-based Curricular Reform

A Tale of Two Colleges

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Few still believe that institutional assessment in general and programmatic assessment in particular are simply passing fads in higher education. Indeed, the very survival of our institutions of higher learning may increasingly depend upon how well we can demonstrate that our students are learning what we claim they are learning. The most important component in the educational process is the instructors themselves. They are the ones who must provide their students with both the disciplinary or multi-disciplinary knowledge that they will need in pursuit of their careers. They also provide their students with the ability to think for themselves as responsible citizens in a multi-cultural world. If the goal of assessment is quality improvement in the education "product," faculty, as primary stakeholders in the design and implementation of student outcomes, must also assume responsibility for the design and implementation of the

assessment process. It is in assuming this task that some can serve as leaders.

This inquiry will demonstrate how two distinct institutions of higher learning within the Middle States region are meeting that challenge through the creation and implementation of a viable institutional assessment plan. Although one is a service institution with a distinct mission and the other a liberal-arts college with many pre-professional and professional programs, important parallels exist in creating structures and processes for the involvement of faculty in institutional assessment. Equally significant too is the role that distinct institutional mission and culture play in academic program planning and assessment.

The process of undertaking assessment serves two objectives. The first purpose of assessment is to demonstrate accountability. Principally, colleges and universities have a responsibility to their students as consumers of educational services. In addition, they are accountable to governmental bodies who underwrite the cost of education through their state legislators, to accreditation boards that hold institutions of higher learning to general standards of educational quality, and to foundations that require recipients of grant monies to demonstrate achievement of that which was expected. The second objective in assessment is program improvement. For students, the assessment of learning outcomes can bring the reward of a more enriching college experience that both challenges their intellect and raises their awareness of broader ethical values. In a practical context, it can lead to a more promising career, as prospective employers recognize and appreciate the quality in the student's training. For instructors and student development personnel, student outcomes assessment can help them be more effective teachers and mentors.

Institutional assessment involves both structure and process. "Structure," in this context, is the organization of component parts in an administrative plan; "process" refers to a course or method of operation. In assessment, each component interacts with the other, and both are essential for a comprehensive

institutional assessment plan (IAP). Structures are the "building blocks" in an IAP. Processes are how these "building blocks" interact.

All institutional assessment plans share certain basic structural components. These include the institution's mission and specific programmatic goals. The mission statement defines the institution's broad objectives for its student clientele, what it intends for its students to learn; programmatic goals are more specific and include learning outcomes in academic and student development areas; or planning, efficiency or delivery of services in financial or support service areas. Specific academic areas from which programmatic goals are derived include curriculum, such as majors, minors, and an education core. Mission objectives and programmatic goals should be clearly articulated so that they can provide guides for institutional assessment. Programmatic goals should complement broader institutional objectives. Hence there needs to be consistency and continuity among them.

In a comprehensive institutional assessment plan, structures need to be coordinated for assessment activities. For example, programmatic goals and student learning outcomes in academic curricula should be linked to broader objectives of the institutional mission as well as to individual courses. As part of a comprehensive institutional assessment plan, assessment activities are implemented and integrated at all levels of the course design process so that it is clear that courses meet specific needs identified at the programmatic level. A comprehensive IAP closes the assessment loop through the integration of a planning process. Empirical comprehensive data are utilized to determine whether desired outcomes are being achieved. Programmatic goals and/or the learning outcomes can be modified after assessment results are analyzed.

Processes of institutional assessment address how the task is to be accomplished. In this regard, institutions must balance faculty involvement with administrative oversight. Senior administrators view their campuses from an institutional perspective and

formulate strategies for integrating assessment processes on an inter-divisional basis. Their oversight should extend to the integration of planning mechanisms that close the assessment loop. Within academic affairs, the provost or divisional deans play a role in fostering institutional responsibility for assessment by faculty, and verify that assessment is being undertaken in a manner consistent with agreed upon guidelines. Because faculty are often involved in teaching courses that serve different curricula, including the education core, it is important to encourage faculty leadership and ownership initiatives. In fact, the process of faculty involvement may initially be more important than the actual assessment of the measurable outcome. It can give faculty a vested interest in enhancing the quality of the learning process. Encouraging leadership/ownership initiatives implies a recognition of the importance of the faculty perspective and overcomes the perception that assessment is a threat to their integrity as teachers.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle in implementing a faculty centered comprehensive assessment process is institutional culture. Creating incentives for the change and management of an institutional culture is a continuous, evolving challenge. Recognition of faculty sensitivities, rewarding their accomplishments, holding workshops to address concerns and process issues, and establishing systems to monitor processes are just some of the strategies that campuses need to adopt. But the ultimate incentive to create and manage cultural change is the recognized necessity for institutional accountability and a belief that the process holds certain personal advantages for the individual. The "personal advantages" for a faculty member may be in having more students who want to learn because they have a clear understanding of learning outcomes.

It should be recognized too that there is not one correct method to undertake institutional assessment. Case studies of the assessment activities at West Point and SUNY-Oneonta underscore this viewpoint. Each of these institutions have very distinct cultures, and the relationship between "structure" and "process" in undertaking institutional assessment, noted in detail

below, reflect these differences. Nonetheless, commonalities exist in so far as each institution requires a structure and process in order to manage institutional change

The West Point Experience

As the sole institution of higher education in the nation whose primary responsibility is to prepare cadets for a career as professional Army officers, the Academic Program at the United States Military Academy must provide cadets with an intellectual foundation necessary for service as a commissioned officer. In combination with other aspects of the West Point experience, the Academic Program must also foster development in leadership, moral courage, and integrity essential to such service. Programs are developed so that, whatever individual fields of study cadets pursue, the approximately 1000 graduates of any particular year group share a common experience based on a core curriculum for the sole purpose of graduating commissioned Army leaders of character.[1]

Structural Imperatives

To develop Army leaders of character, the Academy's Academic Program incorporates a multifaceted curriculum, organized around nine interdisciplinary goals, each of which are derived from stated Army needs. A detailed description and rationale of this curricular structure is presented in *Educating Army Leaders for the 21st Century*, the Academic Program's strategic concept for the intellectual preparation of Army officers (United States Military Academy, 1998).

1 The mission of the United States Military Academy is: To educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, and Country, professional growth throughout a career as an officer in the United States Army, and a lifetime of selfless service to the nation.

the Academic Program is doing in meeting its educational goals, identifying those that may require additional attention. For these reasons, the Academic Program's assessment system is designed to be **goal based** and **responsive to decision-makers,** with an emphasis on the use of **multiple measures** collected at **multiple points in time** in order to reduce measurement error and increase the validity of inferences about cadets' academic progress. Assessment indicators are selected to **maximize the use of existing indicators** and **minimize disruptions** to the Academic Program's existing functions and structures.

The Academic Program is founded on a core curriculum consisting of 31 courses which all cadets must complete. These core courses represent a balance between math, science, engineering, humanities, and the behavioral and social sciences. Courses are chosen for inclusion in the core curriculum based on their relevance to nine goals, which when taken together, provide purpose and direction for the Academic Program. Learning models are designed for each of the nine goals. These models are analogous to a blueprint of the curriculum; in effect, they provide a conceptual foundation to guide the selection and arrangement of experiences intended to promote goal achievement. Explicitly acknowledged in each goal's learning model are descriptions about the structure, process, and content of the curriculum that will lead to achievement of the goal.[2]

2 For an in-depth discussion on this topic, see, *Educating Army Leaders for the 21st Century*, especially page 17.

Learning models for each of the Academic Program's nine goals and their corresponding curricular structures are continuously assessed by goal teams, composed of multi-disciplinary faculty, which place particular emphasis on the analyses of indicators strategically embedded within the curriculum. The goal teams, in conjunction with the Assessment Steering Committee determine what changes, if any, may need to be incorporated into the existing curriculum and with respect to which specific program areas.[3] Information is also gathered through surveys of cadets, graduates, and graduates' company commanders, as supervisors, in an effort to gather institutional and program-level data on the strength of developmental programs within the West Point experience. Officer-performance data, in the form of promotion, retention, and school or command selection board results are also monitored periodically to assess how well West Point's graduates perform in the Army. These indicators provide multiple measures of the Academic Program's nine goals, gathered at multiple points in time, to assess the extent to which the Academic Program's goals are fully implemented into both the curriculum and learning environment.

Indicators are collected annually for the purpose of assessing cadets' perceptions of their academic performances while at West Point, commanders' perceptions of their field performances, and the perceptions of the faculty and staff regarding the organizational climate and learning environment. These indicators, and the corresponding methodology, have gradually evolved to answer questions raised by the assessment process. In selecting indicators, the emphasis has been on the use of multiple methods gathered at multiple time points. Four indicators have emerged as integral components of the Academic Program's assessment system.

3 The Assessment Steering Committee is an administrative oversight board, consisting of department chairpersons and administrators, who review, critique, and disseminate the work on the assessment initiatives.

First, the Dean's Office undertook a revision of the First Class survey (a senior survey), which, although it had been collected for many years, was substantially modified during the 1996-97 academic year to more accurately capture cadets' perceptions as they pertained to the Academic Program's revised goal statements and its corresponding learning environment. Administered by the Institutional Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Policy and Planning Analysis (OPA), First Class cadets are randomly assigned to one of three versions of the questionnaire corresponding to each of these three respective programs (Academic, Military, or Physical). The result produces samples equal to approximately one-third of the First Class. Results are used to assess the perceived confidence that members of the First Class hold with respect to their abilities in areas associated with the Academic Program's nine goals.

Second, in 1997, and concurrent with the administration of the First Class survey, all members of the Fourth Class (first-year students) were initially administered a questionnaire to assess their overall confidence levels in skills associated with the Academic Program's nine goals. This survey largely parallels that administered to the First Class. Also administered by the Institutional Research and Analysis Branch of OPA, the Fourth Class survey is conducted annually, allowing for an analysis of cross-sectional changes and the establishment of benchmarks. When results of the Fourth Class survey are combined with a year group's corresponding responses to the First Class survey (acquired four years later), the Academic Program is able to assess longitudinal change in cadets' reported confidence with regard to their skill levels associated with each of the nine goals as well as their satisfaction with the learning environment.

Third, beginning in 1997, a USMA working group, consisting of representatives from each of the Academy's three programs, conducted focus group interviews with former battalion commanders located at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. This initiative, analogous to an employers' survey, provided prompt feedback from graduates' supervisors, identifying how the commanders felt graduates of the United

States Military Academy perform, as lieutenants and captains, with respect to the stated goals of the Academic, Military, and Physical programs. Moreover, interviews with the commanders identify, to the extent possible, their perceived fit between the stated USMA program goals and the Army's needs. Battalion commanders who participated in the study consisted of volunteers selected on two criteria: (1) the type of battalion they commanded and (2) recollection of at least two graduates of the USMA who served in the battalion. The focus group interviews are conducted annually, and concurrently for the three USMA programs.

Fourth, and most recently, each of the Academic Program's nine goals is annually assessed by a *goal team*; a multi-disciplinary operational-level body composed of faculty who are brought together to (a) integrate courses within the Academic Program's curriculum, (b) conduct periodic assessments in accordance with the Academic Program's assessment system, and (c) monitor the implementation of curricular recommendations that result from such assessments. While, in concept, this activity previously existed in the form of goal committees who periodically reported on comparable information, the nature of the committee structure was oriented toward the completion of short-term tasks. The Assessment Steering Committee was required to regularly reconstitute a goal committee when it sought to extend the review of a goal beyond a single year, thereby losing valuable time in the implementation of recommendations from the preceding goal committee's report. By contrast, each goal team is viewed as a permanent multi-disciplinary group of subject matter experts whose orientation is both long-term and continuous. Goal teams, representative of each of the Academic Program's nine goals, annually prepare reports for the Assessment Steering Committee; the nine reports are summarized and reviewed by the General Committee.

Two other indicators, presently in the planning process, will, when collected, complete the Academic Program's assessment system. First, all graduates from a particular year group, beginning with the class of 1996, will be surveyed to assess their

perceptions of how well the Academy accomplishes its five outcome goals, the purpose of which is to prepare graduates for careers in the Army. The survey will include all active-duty graduates from a commissioned class, administered three years after graduation. Each graduate from the class will be sent a questionnaire to assess their confidence in managing specific skills and attributes associated with the Academy's five outcome goals. Responses will be directly compared to their respective responses from the First and Fourth Class surveys, thereby providing a source of longitudinal assessment from the plebe year through three years after graduation. Second, and linked to the first, the USMA is currently undertaking the design and administration of a survey of battalion commanders. Although the results of commanders' focus group interviews at the Army War College offer an opportunity to gather valuable information from Army leaders about the performance of USMA graduates, as focus group interviews, they are not generalizable to the views of Army battalion commanders. This commanders' survey, directed toward graduates' company commanders, will compare commanders' responses to those whom they evaluate (the graduates). The survey of graduates and commanders, intended to be initially administered during the Fall, 1999, will offer multiple perspectives on outcomes of both institutional and program-level goals.

Beyond the data sources previously noted, three additional indicators are routinely collected to focus on specific aspects of the learning environment. First, departments are offered an opportunity to bring distinguished professors to the Academy, who serve as senior-level faculty for one year. Upon completion of their tenure at the Academy, these professors submit a report to the Dean, outlining their perceptions of the Academic Program's learning environment. The reports, when examined as a set and over time, provide a trend analysis of common themes. Second, beginning in 1997, the Dean requested an annual survey of the command climate. This survey is undertaken to assess the morale and organizational climate of all persons, both staff and faculty, who are associated with the Academic Program.

Indicators are measured and benchmarked to assess the perceived quality of supervision, work autonomy, communication, teamwork, respect for others, work satisfaction, morale, and organizational effectiveness; these represent key components of the learning environment. Third, cadets, upon the completion of each academic course, are encouraged to submit a questionnaire so that instructors, departments, and the Dean's Office receive timely feedback on cadets' perceived quality of instruction. Taken together, these three important indicators represent multiple perspectives of the Academic Program's learning environment.

Process Considerations

The design and implementation of these initiatives at the USMA are embedded within an historical process of educational reform dating back to the late 1980s. The USMA acknowledged four areas of concern regarding outcomes assessment initiatives in their 1989 decennial *Institutional Self-Study* report to the Commission of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, hereafter referred to as Middle States. These included the need to focus on the Academy's goals, the systematic integration of outcomes assessment through comprehensive program reviews, the routine collection of feedback from and about graduates, and the utilization of longitudinal cohort reviews through the management of existing data bases. In response to this report, Middle States recommended the development of more consistent and theoretically based definitions of leadership as the unifying concept for the Academy's programs (Academic, Military, and Physical), outlining how the programs contribute to the accomplishment of the Academy's outcome goals. In addition, Middle States recommended the USMA take steps to ensure that the Academy's intellectual foundation goal not become overshadowed by the foci of the Military and Physical programs.

During 1990–91, the Curriculum Committee began a review and revision of the Academic Program's goals; members of the committee soon discovered that, in the absence of purpose, consensus could not be reached on the specific wording of the goal statements. In 1991, the dean established the Academic Assessment Committee, staffed by faculty and tasked to build upon the 1989 Curriculum Committee's recommendations, which were presented in the *Institutional Self-Study* accreditation report; these recommendations sought to implement a curriculum that was both goal based and tied to a systematic assessment review process. The Academic Assessment Committee designed a model for purposes of curriculum assessment and tested this model on one of the Academic Program's nine goals— the engineering thought process. The Committee succeeded in this endeavor, presenting the results in a report (United States Military Academy, 1994). Upon completion of this task, the Academic Assessment Committee was dissolved.

One important recommendation, which emerged from the Academic Assessment Committee's report, was a reorganization of the dean's staff to "provide an appropriate balance between centralized direction…and decentralized implementation…" (p. 7). The dean subsequently created an Academic Affairs Division, eventually staffed by an associate dean of academic affairs, an assistant dean for academic assessment, a curricular specialist, and a clerical secretary. All curriculum and academic assessment matters were subsequently placed within the purview of the Academic Affairs Division.

During the 1994–95 academic year, five additional Academic Program goals were selected for review, each of which was assigned to a goal committee; these included goals for (1) understanding human behavior, (2) math-science-technology, (3) historical awareness, (4) culture, and (5) communication. Each committee, chaired by a department head and composed of faculty, was charged with the design and assessment of the goal's respective learning model. The Assessment Steering Committee, a new administrative body, emerged as a viable solution for the provision of standardizing oversight of the work generated by

each of the goal committees; this committee evolved out of the assessment effort and was not chartered or created specifically by the Dean. Chairpersons of each goal committee served as members of the Assessment Steering Committee. In reviewing and, in some instances, restating the Academic Program's goals, each goal committee was asked to provide a rationale and amplification of the goal's purpose, tied to the Army's needs, and a statement about what USMA graduates can do upon their successful completion of the goal. Members of the Assessment Steering Committee utilized a common set of core courses as a curricular framework to ensure that all graduates, regardless of their field of study, held competencies in all subject areas deemed to be essential for the intellectual foundation necessary for officership in the Army. The Assessment Steering Committee provided a critical forum for discussion that ensured uniform methods were used to assess the design and implementation of curriculum associated with each goal. In effect, a standard approach evolved, emphasizing the structure (how courses are organized to reach goals), process (how cadets are taught), and content (substantive foci) of the goals' respective learning models. In 1995, the USMA reported, in its *Periodic Review Report* to Middle States that it now had a model in place with which to routinely assess outcomes for the Academic Program's goals (United States Military Academy, 1995).

Four of the five goal committees completed an assessment of their respective learning models by June 1996 and followed in June 1997 by an assessment of the goals' corresponding implementation and outcomes. The committee tasked to assess the Academic Program's cultural awareness goal identified significant inconsistencies in its curricular design and, after offering specific recommendations, ceased further work until 1998 in order so that the Curriculum Committee could correct the existing gaps in the curriculum. In a manner consistent with the aforementioned process, an assessment of the Academic Program's remaining three goals commenced during the 1996–97 academic year; these goals included (1) creativity, (2) moral awareness, and (3) continued educational development.

Following the Academic Board's approval of the new goals, three new goal committees were created and staffed for the purpose of assessing them. The three goal committees completed an assessment of the learning models and curricular design for the respective goals by the end of the 1997–98 academic year. The learning models from each of the nine goal papers were subsequently organized into a single document during 1998, entitled, *Educating Army Leaders for the 21st Century*, which represented the Academic Program's strategic concept for the pre-commissioning Bachelor of Science degree at the USMA.

More recently, the Assessment Steering Committee replaced the goal committees with Goal Teams, multi-disciplinary operational-level bodies whose purpose is to integrate courses within the Academic Program's curriculum through the implementation of curricular recommendations that result from annual assessments. With a focus on long-term oversight, each Goal Team manages the collection and utilization of data to document the extent to which cadets accomplish the desired goal, identifying any potentially problematic areas in the curriculum. Attention is directed toward the implementation and analysis of embedded course indicators, strategically located within the core curriculum, as well as cadets' responses to attitudinal surveys administered during their Fourth and First Class years.

The Oneonta Experience

SUNY College at Oneonta enrolls approximately 5,000 undergraduates and 300 graduate students. Currently there are three divisions in the College: Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, and Student Development. Academic Affairs includes the academic sub-divisions of Science and Social Science, and Behavioral and Applied Science. Each is led by a dean who reports directly to the Provost. These two deans work with more than 25 academic department chairs and approximately 230 faculty who offer 65 liberal arts majors, pre-professional and profession programs. The largest contingency of undergraduate majors is found in programs associated with the

fields of teacher education, economics and business, psychology, and human ecology. Some programs are specialized, such as music industries and dietetics, while others are common to many campuses.

Concurrent with assessment initiatives in Student Development, the Division of Academic Affairs began implementing comprehensive assessment of undergraduate education focused on programmatic review over a three-year cycle in the early 1990s. The College's assessment initiative was enhanced and expanded when an Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF) was convened in 1996. Specifically, this group was charged with formulating a comprehensive institutional assessment plan (IAP) to tie assessment to planning and budgeting and to prepare the College for its five-year periodic review report to Middle States. The OATF had broad representation from across campus units, including both faculty and students from the two academic subdivisions. It was chaired by faculty from each of the two academic subdivisions.

As Oneonta undertook the latest round of assessment activities, considerable attention was focused on process, that is, the role of faculty in assessment and, more specifically, faculty ownership and leadership of the assessment process. However, the OATF had to work within and sometimes around Oneonta's various "structural" features, including the College Mission, Comprehensive College Plan, programmatic goals, academic majors and programs, and the general education core.

Structural Imperatives

One of Oneonta's key structural components is its mission statement, which includes among its goals, "to foster student intellectual development through an emphasis on excellence in teaching, advisement, and scholarly activities." The Mission also identifies other broad goals for all students, such as:

- Critical thinking and communicating clearly
- Lifelong learning
- Sustaining the environment
- Improving society

Oneonta's structural components also include a Comprehensive College Plan (CCP) that addresses more specific goals for the College in areas such as: Academic Quality; Retention; Recruitment; and Image and Tradition. Additional structure is provided by programmatic goals which identify numerous priorities for programs, and range from agendas for renovating space to faculty development. To date, programmatic goals relative to student learning outcomes have varied in quality and quantity across programs.

Oneonta's general education core has its own structure, which includes various perspectives clustered in areas such as, nature and mathematics, society and human behavior, and human value and expression. Students satisfy these perspectives by completing any combination of courses within the designated clusters. However, most of these perspectives do not yet have explicit student learning outcomes. Thus, the structure of the general education core certainly presents challenges for the process of assessment.

Oneonta's structure with regard to curriculum design is "bottom-up" in that department faculty design, revise, add and delete curricular and course offerings; materials are then submitted to the deans for their consideration. There are several advantages to this including: faculty ownership of content; complimentary variations in teaching styles; and a wide diversity of learning experiences for students. There are however, disadvantages as well. For example, goals and content in different sections of the same course tend to diverge over time; overlap and unproductive duplication between courses evolves; gaps in content develop if faculty assume that someone else is teaching vital content; and communication and collaboration between and among faculty may, over time, become the exception rather than the rule.

However, assessment requires collaboration and communication, and if these are not occurring regularly, then they will have to be addressed as assessment is undertaken.

Given Oneonta's "bottom-up" structure, implementing change, in this case, the need to assess student learning, had numerous implications for faculty leaders of the assessment process. Consequently, some process guidelines were established to promote collaboration and communication as faculty began to undertake assessment. For example, the OATF decided that assessment would be done by program units, and that cooperation and input from most, if not all, unit members would be essential. Furthermore, the focus would be on assessment of student learning rather than the classroom performance of individual instructors. Faculty needed to move from independent to collective decision-making regarding program goals and student outcomes. It is critical to document how other structural elements, such as the Mission Statement and CCP, become the foundation for program goals and student outcomes. Assessment activities need to be cyclical and on-going with specific deadlines for completing specified assessment activities.

The collection and utilization of empirical data was another important function to consider. The advent of ever faster and more sophisticated technology resulted in rather enormous amounts of data being used by those who collected it; however, a "bottoms-up" structure did not always promote the communication of information and data to others who might have made use of it. The challenge then, was to encourage collaboration in all phases of data collection, and broad sharing of the information we had that was needed for and could be used in assessment.

Another structural consideration was the role of the academic deans. They were the administrators who insured that all programs complied with college-wide assessment plans. They also reviewed assessment activities and results, and made budgetary and staffing decisions accordingly. While this

effectively "closed the loop" for the College, another procedure was needed to provide closure from the perspective of faculty.

Since the early 1990s, Oneonta has had a Future Directions Committee (FDC) which is broad-based across campus divisions. This group is charged with review of College Mission Statement and CCP. The OATF suggested that to enhance the assessment process, the FDC become a vital link in "closing the loop." Thus, the FDC has access to assessment summaries and analyses as they review and suggest modifications in the Mission Statement and CCP.

Process Considerations

The key consideration for accomplishing assessment at Oneonta was establishing processes that were consistent with our commitment to the importance of faculty participation and ownership of assessment. We needed to strike what was for us the appropriate balance between faculty involvement and administrative oversight. Consequently, the administration established the OATF, and faculty were chosen to lead his group. Thus, the precedent was set for faculty to spear-head assessment activities on campus, with broad faculty and staff involvement in the assessment of student outcomes. In fact, our process objectives and "bottoms-up" structure mandated more than just faculty involvement - they called for faculty to be trained as and to assume the role of leaders of our assessment initiatives.

To accomplish this, the OTAF needed to begin working with faculty where they were in the assessment process and encourage them to assume expanded roles whenever possible. Accordingly, faculty were urged to:

- recognize that assessment of student learning would continue to be their responsibility as an integral part of the teaching-learning process;
- explore professional and national standards as they formulated student outcomes;

- identify what students would need to know, value, and be able to do upon graduation.

Achieving the desired results while working with a liberal arts and professional program oriented faculty had both challenges and advantages. Some of the challenges originated from the fact that faculty at Oneonta had different experiences with programmatic assessment and assessment of student learning. For example, faculty involved with teacher education are accustomed to portfolios, rubrics and other student learning assessment tools. Professional faculty had considerable experience with their own professional accrediting agencies, so assessment was "old news" to them. However, liberal arts faculty had limited experience with assessment, and many did not understand how to undertake it or know the expectations of assessment for accreditation. Thus, on the same campus at the same time, it was not unusual to have one group that has grown weary of doing assessment and another group that is reluctant to begin because they see assessment as an unknown or as an intrusion.

At Oneonta, we used this dichotomy as an advantage. We included representatives from both groups on the OATF and had those with assessment experience move more quickly into the leadership of assessment initiatives. Individual faculty with assessment experience served as peer teachers, and greatly expanded the mentoring resources of the OATF. Those who feared the unknown waters of assessment got assistance from others with experience, and had the opportunity to see examples of assessment instruments and reports developed by colleagues.

To accomplish the task of assessing student outcomes, Oneonta's faculty assessment leaders opted to utilize the eight steps outlined in the book, *Leading Change* (Kotter, 1996). These steps are:

- Establish a sense of urgency
- Create a guiding coalition
- Develop a vision and strategy

- Communicate the change vision
- Empower employees for broad-based action
- Generate short-term wins
- Consolidate gains and producing more change
- Anchor new approaches in the culture

For the college, "establishing a sense of urgency" was not difficult because the Middle States Association's deadline for Oneonta's submission of its five-year periodic review report provided an incentive for faculty to begin working in earnest on the assessment of student learning. Other "urgencies" include New York's expectations with regard to "performance indicators" for public funding of higher education, and the need to meet expectations of other accrediting agencies. "Creating the guiding coalition" was addressed through the formation of the OATF, whose membership was consistent with our "bottom-up" structure. "Developing a vision and strategy" for assessment was the next step. The "vision" communicated by the OATF was one of the College dedicated to continuous programmatic improvement and faculty leadership of assessment. The "strategy" was to have direct and on-going faculty involvement in the assessment process which was defined by the IAP. Members of the OATF helped to convey the College's belief that broad faculty involvement in assessment is more important than assessment results generated in isolation.

To implement "communicating the change vision," the OATF held hearings on the IAP, and subsequently developed workshops for faculty on assessment of student learning. "Empowering broad-based action" meant rotating membership on the OATF and the FDC. Faculty represent both academic divisions, and both junior and senior faculty are asked to serve. For the OATF, members are selected who have varied kinds and amounts of assessment experience ranging from novice to pro. Members of both groups as well as other faculty from the campus at large attended workshops and conferences, such as

those sponsored by Middle States and the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE).

To "generate short-term wins," the OATF provided feedback on the processes departments used for assessment and the deans provided feedback on the substance. In both situations, the feedback given highlighted the strengths as well as areas where continuing work was required. With the deans in attendance, members of the OATF jointly showcased "early" successes at a forum attended by department chairs and program directors.

Although much remains to be accomplished, Oneonta is "consolidating gains and producing more change." As a result of assessment activities and with communication and collaboration between and among faculty, some changes have occurred within courses and curricula. Additionally, the FDC examines available summaries and analyses in order to fulfill their charge of reviewing the Mission Statement and CCP. This role is crucial in closing the assessment loop.

The final step suggested by Kotter, "anchoring new approaches in the culture" is the most challenging of all. Oneonta has attempted to reinforce cultural change by examining incentives and rewards, which are always in short supply. One suggestion to encourage faculty's on-going involvement in making desired changes is publicly show-casing innovations, solutions, and successes in assessment. In some program areas, faculty have incorporated activities related to assessment in department expectations for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. It is important to reward authentic assessment, not contrived results.

Rotating membership on the FDC and the OATD has been used to sustain the momentum once the "urgency" is diminished. The College is provided with assessment updates through the campus newsletter, an in-house assessment list-serve, and web-pages. Discussion of assessment is encouraged at forums such as the monthly Teaching Breakfast. The administration continues to provide support for faculty development by funding their participation in professional assessment conferences, and by

encouraging research and publication of assessment-related scholarly works.

Conclusion

Assessment-based curriculum reform requires a balance between administrative oversight and faculty leadership. Regardless of the unique institutional mission, an institutional assessment plan requires the presence of both structure and process for the purpose of effecting accountability to broad-based constituencies and program improvement. Structural components of institutional assessment plans require a statement of mission, goals, and organizational framework for the purpose of curriculum design, implementation, and outcomes assessment. Process considerations for institutional assessment plans require efforts at balancing widespread faculty participation and leadership opportunities with administrative oversight. As such, faculty roles, incentives, and rewards must be identified and incorporated into the institutional culture in order to effectively manage curriculum reform.

Institutional assessment plans share common structure and process components regardless of the unique culture and mission. Nonetheless, the balance between faculty prerogative and administrative oversight for curriculum design and outcomes assessment is unique to each institution. Moreover, differences in institutional culture and mission may impact upon the intra-institutional dynamics of assessment processes. These processes, however, are not necessarily altered by either the number of academic programs or their substantive content.

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Broadening Teaching Options through Technology Centers

The Delaware Technical & Community College Approach

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Delaware Technical & Community College is a two-year, state supported college serving the people of Delaware. The College operates four campuses throughout the state, positioned so that everyone in Delaware is no more than 25 miles from the nearest campus. The Stanton and Wilmington campuses serve New Castle county, the Terry campus serves Kent county, and the Owens campus serves Sussex county.

The College decided to change the way teaching and learning is accomplished to improve access to instruction and meet the evolving learning needs of adults. To make this transition, the College adopted and modified the Multi-Access Education Instructional Model, established an Action Planning Committee, Teaching Resource Centers, the Center for Educational Technology, Educational Technology Labs at each campus, and faculty workshops and training.

Multi-Access Education Instructional Model

The Multi-Access Education Model (Appendix 1) was developed at Miami-Dade Community College to describe the range of instructional modes available in higher education. We have

matched specific instructional modes and specific technologies to the elements of the model. The Multi-Access Education Model serves to remind the faculty that technology can be applied to any instructional mode no matter how traditionally the course is taught or whether it is technology-dependent.

Action Planning Committee

Early in the strategic planning process, the College formed an action planning committee to serve as a forum for discussion and policy recommendations for the President's Council. The committee included the vice president for academic affairs, the assistant vice president for computing services, the assistant vice president for technical services, the assistant vice president for educational technology and academic support, assistants to the campus directors, the deans of instruction from all four campuses, the coordinator of the Head Librarians' Group, and faculty members representing each campus. The Action Planning Committee achieved consensus on a commitment to make a fundamental change in how the College supports faculty and students for teaching and learning.

Teaching Resource Centers

The College established Teaching Resource Centers at each Campus. These centers are a cooperative effort by the Faculty Senate and the dean of instruction at each campus. The Faculty Senate appoints a coordinating committee that represents faculty training interests. The dean of instruction provides a budget and space as well as suggestions for faculty training. Together, they run regular seminar opportunities of interest to the faculty and the College, arranged through a part-time coordinator. These centers also get teaching materials for the faculty and provide space for them to prepare classroom materials outside their offices.

Center for Educational Technology

The Center for Educational Technology implements the College Educational Technology Plan by scheduling distance learning resources, supporting the Teaching Resource Center educational technology labs and multimedia development at each campus, and coordinating training and support opportunities for faculty within a Multi-Access Education Model. It is staffed by a director, secretary, instructional designer, applications support specialist and a video-audio production specialist.

Educational Technology Labs

Each campus has an educational technology lab for use by the faculty to develop course materials. The lab is set up to facilitate collaborative courseware development with appropriate hardware and software tools as well as desktop videoconferencing available at each station (Appendices 2 and 3). An applications support specialist and a video audio production specialist to assist the faculty develop their instructional materials are available in the lab. An instructional designer is available to help faculty design their courses and specific learning activities. Each campus has a faculty training lab which has networked computers for each learner as well as video projection and multimedia presentation systems to model appropriate training techniques.

Faculty Workshops and Training

The Teaching Resource Centers sponsor regular seminars and other learning opportunities for the faculty. The Center for Educational Technology invites faculty to bring classes into a properly equipped classroom to hold class involving technology based activities as a model of what is possible in their disciplines.

Delaware Tech's Educational Technology Certificate Program provides teachers, kindergarten through college levels, the instruction and applied practice to develop technology skills for enhanced student learning. Mastery of skills is demonstrated through application of course competencies to the learner's educational setting. Participants have access to the campus Educational Technology Labs for creation of instructional technology tools. The program consists of a 4-credit Introductory Certificate and an 18-credit Advanced Certificate. Courses are offered year-round.

The Introductory Certificate is designed for those who have limited knowledge of educational technology or those who are new to the field. The four 1-credit courses in the Introductory Certificate are designed to be taken together as a series. The course competencies for this certificate are prerequisite skills for entry into the Advanced Certificate Program. Participants may satisfy this skill-set prerequisite by earning the Introductory Certificate or by completing a self-assessment process which demonstrates the skills for advisor approval.

The Advanced Certificate is a comprehensive program that builds on the introductory technology skill-set. Participants develop proficiency in using technology-based strategies to improve teaching and learning. The certificate consists of six 3-credit courses with four required courses and a choice of two elective courses covering topics in advanced courseware development, assessment, and distance education.

Conclusion

Delaware Technical & Community College is improving instruction and access to learning for the people of Delaware through a centrally managed and locally implemented approach to provide hardware, software, direct assistance and faculty seminars as well as other training opportunities. The College also offers its faculty and K–12 teachers an educational technology certificate program which allows them to construct materials and use technology-based activities to improve the learning

experience, including accommodating different learning styles. More information, including photos of the educational technology labs, is available at our web site *www.dtcc.edu/edtech*.

Appendix 1

Multi-Access Education Model

Judy C. Lever, Director, Information Technology Center
Miami-Dade Community College

Type of Access	Same Time/Same Place	Same Time/Different Place Different Time/Same Place Different Time/Different Place	Same Time/Different Place Different Time/Different Place
Instructional Mode	Presentation/Internet	Interactive Classroom Telecourse/On-line	Telecourse/On-line

Technology Enhancements
Web Page
E-mail
Computer Conference
Phone/Fax
Multi-Media Presentation
Internet Research
Overhead Slides
CD-ROM
Audio Conference
Video Conference

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Appendix 2
Teaching Resource Center, Educational Technology Labs
Hardware

Development Computer 1	Development Computer 2	Development Computer 3	Development Computer 4	Notebook Computers	Multimedia Presentation System	Miscellaneous
Optiplex Gxa 300MHz Pentium II processor w/512K cache) w/19" monitor	Optiplex Gxa 300MHz Pentium II processor w/512K cache) w/19" monitor	Optiplex Gxa 300MHz Pentium II processor w/512K cache) w 19" monitor	Optiplex Gxa 300MHz Pentium II processor w/512K cache) w/ 19" monitor	Dell Inspiron 3000 Multimedia Notebook 200 MHz Pentium MMX) 10 Students	Gateway Destination D6-300XL 300MHZ Pentium with 36" Monitor and DVD Drive, Surround Sound	HP LaserJet 5Si Mopier 24PPM 600DPI Duplex Printer Kit
Matrox Rainbow Runner Studio Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	Matrox Rainbow Runner Studio Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	Matrox Rainbow Runner Studio Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	HP 2X/6X SureStore CD-Writer Plus Rewritable Drive	Dell Inspiron 3000 Multimedia Notebook 266 MHz Pentium MMX) Instructor	AG1320 Panasonic AG 1320 VCR	3COM Superstack II Entry Hub 10MB w/12RJ45 (Non Stackable)
MatroxTV Tuner Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	MatroxTV Tuner Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	MatroxTV Tuner Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	Matrox Rainbow Runner Studio Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	Koss SB/30 Microphone Headset ACCS Neodymium Magnet		XG-NV2U Sharp NV2U LCD Projector-Sharp Wheeled Carry Case for NV2
Scanjet 6100Cse Scanner Automatic Document Feeder Transparency Adapter	AG1320 Panasonic AG 1320 VCR	Calcomp Digitizer DrawingSlate II 6X9 w/click Tip Pen	MatroxTV Tuner Upgrade for Millenium II Windows NT	Kensington, MicroSaver Cable & Lock		Kodak DS 210 1152X864 4MB w/Flash and AC Adapter 210
AG1320 Panasonic AG 1320 VCR	IOMEGA Zip Plus	AG1320 Panasonic AG 1320 VCR	AG1320 Panasonic AG 1320 VCR			Oversize Monitor Table for up to 37" Monitors with 8" pneumatic tires
IOMEGA Zip Plus	Canon VizCam 1000	IOMEGA Zip Plus	IOMEGA Zip Plus			Canon VizCam 1000 with Carrying Case
Canon VizCam 1000		Canon VizCam 1000	Canon VizCam 1000			Canon Portable Light Box
						Stomp, CD Stomper Pro
						Labtec Microphone
						Yamaha, Pwrd Computer Speakers
						Bretford five-in-one adjustable cart (2)

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Appendix 3
Teaching Resource Center, Educational Technology Labs
Software Availability by Computer

Development Computer 1	Development Computer 2	Development Computer 3	Development Computer 4	Notebook Computers	Multimedia Presentation System
MS Office Professional 97	MS Office Professional 97	MS Office Professional 97	MS Office Professional 97	MS Office Professional 97	MS Office Professional 97
Netscape Communicator 4.03	Netscape Communicator 4.03	Netscape Communicator 4.03	Netscape Communicator 4.03	Netscape Communicator 4.03	Netscape Communicator 4.03
Internet Explorer 3.02	Internet Explorer 3.02	Internet Explorer 3.02	Internet Explorer 3.02	Internet Explorer 3.02	Internet Explorer 3.02
WinZip	WinZip	WinZip	WinZip	WinZip	WinZip
MS Publisher 98	MS Publisher 98	MS Publisher 98	MS Publisher 98	MS Publisher 97	McAfee Virus Scan*
HyperStudio 3.1	HyperStudio 3.1	HyperStudio 3.1	HyperStudio 3.1	HyperStudio 3.1	HyperStudio 3.1
QuickTime for Windows	QuickTime for Windows	QuickTime for Windows	QuickTime for Windows	QuickTime for Windows	QuickTime for Windows
MS Net Meeting*	MS Net Meeting	MS Net Meeting	MS Net Meeting	MS Net Meeting	MS Net Meeting
Matrox PC-VCR Remote	Matrox PC-VCR Remote	Matrox PC-VCR Remote	Matrox PC-VCR Remote	Yamaha Soft Synthesizer	MS Home Essentials 98*
Ulead Media Studio Pro 5.0	Ulead Media Studio Pro 5.0	Ulead Media Studio Pro 5.0	Ulead Media Studio Pro 5.0		MS Professional Reference Suite*
Ulead Photo Express 1.0	Ulead Photo Express 1.0	Ulead Photo Express 1.0	Ulead Photo Express 1.0		
Corel Draw 8.0	Corel Draw 8.0	Corel Draw 8.0	Corel Draw 8.0		
Astound 4.0	Astound 4.0	Astound 4.0	Astound 4.0		
Macromedia Authorware 4.0	Macromedia Authorware 4.0	Macromedia Authorware 4.0	Macromedia Authorware 4.0		
Macromedia Director 6 Multimedia Studio	Macromedia Director 6 Multimedia Studio	Macromedia Director 6 Multimedia Studio	Macromedia Director 6 Multimedia Studio		
Adobe Premier 4.02	Adobe Premier 4.02	Adobe Premier 4.02	Adobe Premier 4.02		
Corel Web Graphics Suite*	Allen Communications Designer's Edge*	MS Front Page*	HP Simple Trax*		
HP DeskScan II*	Allen Communications Net Synergy*	Adobe PageMaker*	Documagix*		
HP ScanJet Copy Utility*	Allen Communications Authorware Synergy**	Adobe PhotoShop	Scan&File*		
Caere OmniPage 8.0*	Corel Gallery Magic 200,000*	ToolBook Instructor II 4.0*	Norton Anti-Virus*		
Caere OmniForm 3.0*	IMSI Master Clips Image Collection*		Corel Print House Magic*		
DataViz Conversions Plus 4.0*			Paper Master*		
Adobe Acrobat 3.0			Adobe Photo Deluxe*		
			Ritz Photo Manager*		
			CD Inserts & Labels**		

* Indicates only one copy per campus

** Indicates only one copy for College

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Benchmarking in Outcomes Assessment

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Many colleges and universities have had difficulty implementing a comprehensive assessment program that focuses on student learning outcomes. Barriers to this objective are numerous, including faculty resistance, inadequate administrative leadership, and insufficient time and resources. Regardless of the reason, many colleges have failed to make significant progress in this area despite the acknowledged need for student learning outcomes assessment as a way of determining program and institutional effectiveness (Gardiner, 1994). To illustrate, the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education's 1995 survey of member colleges and universities revealed that 57 percent did not have assessment plans in place. A survey of actual assessment plan

implementation likely would yield even more discouraging results.

The present paper describes the attempts by four State University of New York institutions to advance assessment on their campuses through the use of a specialized evaluation tool. Specifically, these institutions took part in at least one of two nationwide projects which utilized benchmarking as its primary methodology. The paper provides an explanation of benchmarking, describes the two projects in some detail, and focuses on how the four institutions have utilized these experiences to implement outcomes assessment on their campuses.

Participating Institutions and the SUNY Context

The four participating colleges represented a wide range of institution types within the SUNY system. SUNY Cortland is one of 13 university colleges offering baccalaureate degrees primarily in the arts and sciences as well as in professional programs; undergraduate enrollment is approximately 5,200 students. The SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology (SUNY FIT) has 8,400 students and offers associate, bachelor of science, bachelor of fine arts, and master's degrees. SUNY Empire State College (ESC) enrolls 7,000 students who take most of their courses through independent study, while Tompkins Cortland Connnunity College (TC3) enrolls around 2,700 students.

It is important to note that, prior to participating in the benchmarking projects, all four institutions were typical with respect to the status of assessment on their respective campuses. Faculty and staff frequently voiced their skepticism regarding the need for assessment in higher education, regarding this movement as simply a "fad" and requests that they involve themselves in assessment activity as an "add-on" to their workload. In addition to these internal conflicts, the four institutions were experiencing increasing external pressure to be

more accountable, largely through the demands of accreditation agencies and, in the case of professional programs, certification and licensing groups. Perhaps most significant, during the two years in which the benchmarking projects were being conducted, SUNY System Administration was in the process of developing its new Resource Allocation Methodology (RAM). According to this methodology, SUNY would for the first time allocate funds to individual campuses, based at least in part on designated performance indicators.

All these conditions provided a strong impetus for the participating institutions to make quick progress in the area of assessment, and the two benchmarking projects conducted by the American Productivity and Quality Center represented a prime opportunity in this regard. Therefore, in March 1997 SUNY Cortland and SUNY FIT began participating in the first project entitled "Measuring Institutional Performnance Outcomes." Following this first project, which ended in November 1997, SUNY Cortland, ESC and TC3 participated in the second project, entitled "Assessing Leaming Outcomes," which ran from November 1997 to June 1998. These efforts were made possible through the generous support of SUNY System Administration, which paid the substantial participation fees.

Benchmarking as an Assessment Strategy in Higher Education

Kempner (1993) describes benchmarking as an ongoing, systematic process for measuring and comparing the work processes of one organization to those of another. Another integral component of benchmarking is a search for "best practices," or the identification of those organizations that are performing a process of interest particularly well. Then, groups interested in improving their own processes study these best practice institutions carefully to see how they do it, and then adapt those practices to their own organizations. As Alstete (1995) observes, although benchmarking has been used heavily in recent years by industry, this practice has not been widely

applied in higher education. An important reason may be the fact that faculty members are typically very suspicious of using corporate models in the academy (Gardiner, 1994) and, ultimately, faculty must buy into an outcomes assessment program if it is to succeed.

The American Productivity and Quality Center and Project Methodology

The American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, located in Houston, Texas. Founded in 1977, the APQC specializes in the application of benchmarking as a way of improving productivity and quality. One of its services includes the Institute for Education Best Practices (IEBP), which focuses on the utilization of benchmarking in education, from K–12 systems to colleges and universities. In particular, the IEBP uses "consortium benchmarking," which refers to benchmarking performed by a group of institutions interested in studying similar topics or process areas. Also, consortium benchmarking frequently includes representatives from both education and industry, reflecting the assumption that both these sectors have much to teach and learn from each other.

Study #1: Measuring Institutional Performance Outcomes (MIPO). The focus of the MIPO study, directed by Dr. Peter Ewell of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, was relatively broad, including performance indicators ranging from student satisfaction with enrollment services to the quality of general education. Participants or "study sponsors" included 17 campuses, one state Board of Regents, and one corporation. Examples of higher education institutions taking part were Comell University, four campuses in the California State University system, Hunter College of CUNY, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and Mississippi State University. Best practice partner institutions/organizations were Alvemo College, Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI),

Truman State University, the University of Central England, the University of Phoenix, and Raytheon TI System.

Study #2: Assessing Leaming Outcomes (ALO). The ALO study in some ways emerged out of the MIPO project, and focused specifically on leaming outcomes. This project was directed by Dr. Morris Keeton of the University of Maryland University College in cooperation with the Council for Adult and Experiential Leaming, with Dr. Trudy Banta from IUPUI serving as a special consultant. Participation in this project was much more extensive and varied, consisting of 27 campuses, two state university systems, and four corporations or government agencies. Examples of higher education institutions taking part were DePaul University, Central Connecticut State University, and the University of Hawaii. Best practice partners were Ball State University, Emporia State University, Fidelity Retail Investor Services, Sinclair Community College, Tennessee Valley Authority University, and the University of Phoenix.

Benchmarking Methodology Employed in Projects. For both the MIPO and ALO studies, the sequence of steps depicted in Table 1 were followed.

Bringing It All Back Home: SUNY Cortland

Although SUNY Cortland did not have a systematic assessment plan in place by the mid-1990s, a number of events occurred in 1995 which provided an impetus for making progress in the area of assessment. First was the arrival of a new president, Judson H. Taylor, who firmly believed in assessment and shared this view with the campus. In addition, as SUNY Cortland was beginning to prepare for its five-year periodic review for Middle States, it became clear that the College needed to advance its assessment program significantly before the next full review in 2002.
It should also be noted that SUNY Cortland was fortunate to have a small but dedicated group of individuals who actually believed in assessment before it became fashionable or

Table 1

Study Phase	Major Activities
PrePlanning	Project Director and APQC staff conduct major literature reviews in order to help define project scope and prepare for project
Kick-Off Meeting	Study sponsor representatives meet in Houston to define project scope, identify topics/processes of interest, identify potential best practice partners, and develop screening survey to be administered to the partners
Screening Process	Project Director and APQC staff administer survey to potential best practice partners (and to study sponsors that want to participate), and compile and analyze data for presentation at review meeting
Review Meeting	Study sponsor representatives meet in Houston to review survey results, to choose 5–6 best practice partners, and to develop thorough interview/data collection survey to be administered on site visits
Site Visits	Each best practice partner identifies a 1–2 day period during which study sponsors may send representatives to that site as a group, and site visits take place consisting of presentations by the best practice partner as well as question-and-answer sessions and administration of detailed survey
Analysis	Project Director and APQC staff compile all site visit information, including the completed detailed survey and handouts
Report	Project Director and APQC staff prepare final report, consisting of all survey results, hand-outs, and thorough description of each best practice partner with respect to the key questions of interest in the study
Sharing Session	Representatives from sponsor and best practice partner institutions meet in Houston for discussion of overall study conclusions, with presentations made by each best practice partner institution

mandatory. These persons, who made up the College Assessment Committee, had a thorough understanding of outcomes assessment, but had received little administrative support in the past, and their activities were largely ignored by other faculty and staff.

Beginning in 1995, the provost was given administrative responsibility for assessment and began working with the Assessment Committee, ensuring members that they finally had the administrative support they had been seeking. An early strategy was to bring in outside experts, such as Donald Farmer from King's College. In addition, the Assessment Committee established guidelines that academic programs could follow in developing an assessment plan, complete with sample measures and activities. Still, progress was slow and difficult. For example, during fall 1996, the provost required all academic programs to submit assessment plans based on the guidelines developed by the Assessment Committee. Overall, these plans were very poor, in part because too much had been required and because the guidelines were not well understood. The Assessment Committee then agreed to develop and lead a workshop for departments during the spring 1997 term in an attempt to clarify the assessment plan process. The workshop was a disaster, with attending faculty and chairpersons expressing great frustration at being asked to undertake one more task, one they neither understood nor endorsed.

While this period was discouraging, in retrospect it is clear that positive things were happening. At the very least, assessment was being discussed and, over time, some people were becoming less resistant. In addition, an unusually large number of senior faculty retired at the end of the 1995–96 academic year, and these individuals had offered some of the loudest opposition to assessment. As always, Middle States was exerting pressure and providing a rationale to engage in assessment and, for the first time, SUNY Board of Trustees members were talking more about the need for accountability and the possibility that System Administration should have more control over evaluation efforts. As a result, more faculty were concluding that it would be better

for SUNY Cortland to develop an assessment program based on its own mission and traditions than to have a standardized system of evaluation imposed from outside.

Perhaps most important, the College had begun to take part in the first APQC benchmarking study on measuring performance outcomes, and participating faculty and staff were beginning to gain a better understanding of the assessment process. A critical strategy was to involve as many faculty as possible in the site visits and sharing sessions as well as attendance by the deans at the sharing sessions. To illustrate, between the MIPO and ALO projects, five different faculty members took part in the sharing sessions or the site visits at IUPUI, Truman State University, the University of Phoenix, Emporia State University, or Ball State University. In addition, the provost visited Raytheon TI System and TVA University.

To this point, SUNY Cortland has benefitted most from the site visit component of the MIPO and ALO projects, which provided an excellent opportunity to learn firsthand from model institutions and organizations. One important lesson was that assessment is a slow process. Indeed, two institutions that have been most successful in implementing assessment, Alverno College and Truman State University, have been doing this work seriously for more than two decades. Another lesson is that senior administrators, the President in particular, must be willing to make a commitment to assessment and follow through on that commitment. Third, in almost every case the best practice partners had undergone a crisis which paved the way for an assessment culture (e.g., declining enrollments at Alverno College, the fear of going out of business at Raytheon TI System, increased competition for TVA resulting from government deregulation). Fourth, best practice partners emphasized the need to provide as much direction as possible when requiring assessment plans and to provide prototypes whenever possible. The Assessment Committee, at the provost's request, prepared sample one-page summaries of assessment goals and activities, which were given to departments as a resource in preparing their own summaries. This committee also developed an Assessment

Resource Manual which included sample assessment plans for all academic programs at SUNY Cortland as well as other useful materials, some of which had been obtained from the APQC best practice partners.

Another lesson was that institutions serious about assessment must provide incentives for individuals and programs to participate. A repeated theme heard from the best practice partners was "Reward people who do assessment. Do not punish people for not doing assessment." Although SUNY Cortland has limited resources in this regard, especially compared to private industry, departments and programs have been encouraged to come the administration with specific assessment needs. In particular, the administration made a commitment to provide necessary funding for programs that wanted to administer standardized national tests for their disciplines. Funding has also been made available for speakers, retreats, and stipends. During the 1998–99 academic year, an incentive grant program was developed implemented by the College Assessment Committee. Under this competitive program, academic programs may apply for up to $1,000 to help implement the assessment plan they have developed.

Another benefit of participation in the MIPO and ALO projects was the opportunity to establish contacts at the best practice partner sites. Representatives from these organizations were remarkably gracious, willing to field telephone calls weeks after the site visits. These individuals were also incredibly generous with respect to the materials they were willing to distribute to site visit participants (e.g., sample surveys, department assessment plans).

SUNY Cortland also chose to bring individuals from the best practice partner institutions to campus as consultants. For example, Dr. Candace Young, a political science professor and chair of the Faculty Senate at Truman State University, came to the College during the spring 1998 semester and presented workshops for a number of target groups, including department chairs, the General Education Committee, and faculty interested

in portfolio development. Her credibility, both as someone faculty could relate to and someone knowledgeable regarding assessment, yielded very positive results, and assessment actually began to gain some respect. It was especially gratifying when, shortly after Young's visit, a number of faculty members started to talk publicly about "assessment as faculty development," a phrase commonly heard at Truman State University. In addition, the General Education Committee decided to address assessment in a direct fashion, sponsoring a well-attended retreat to develop course-embedded questions for outcomes assessment. These questions should be ready for piloting during the fall 1999 term.

A final outcome related to SUNY Cortland's participation in the MIPO and ALO studies to date resulted from the fact that all best practice partners had assessment built into their organizational structure. Such an arrangement not only provides a central location where individuals can go for help or information, it also demonstrates clear institutional commitment to the assessment function. Accordingly, when the College's institutional research position opened up due to a retirement, the position was transformed into a director of institutional research and assessment line. This individual, who was hired in December 1999, will have an administrative assistant and a secretary, and will be expected to provide assistance and direction in SUNY Cortland's efforts to advance assessment even further.

Bringing It All Back Home: SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology

SUNY FIT, located in the heart of Manhattan, includes a school of Art and Design, which awards eleven associate's degrees and nine bachelor's degrees, and a school of Business and Technology, which awards six associate's degrees and 10 bachelor's degrees. SUNY FIT also offers four master's programs and four certificate programs. All major programs are closely aligned with the professions which they support. Although in a transitional stage, with numerous searches

underway to fill administrative positions. SUNY FIT did recently hire a new president, Dr. Joyce Brown.

For the most part, assessment efforts are varied at the College, with departments undergoing annual reviews as well as five-year reviews. Academic departments work closely with their Advisory Board to examine curriculum currency, capstone courses, portfolio reviews and other course and program assessment tools. These reviews combined with feedback from external constituents are primarily what guide programs. Additional academic assessment takes place through student surveys, reviews by accrediting associations (e.g., NASAD, FIDER), faculty evaluations, and student evaluations. Administrative personnel reviews and administrative department reviews also support SUNY FIT's assessment efforts. The overall consensus, however, is that even with all of these assessment activities, they generally lack support and direction and produce data that are warehoused, with little encouragement or reward for using infon-nation to bring about change.

SUNY FIT's goals for participating in the MIPO benchmarking study included the following: Gaining best practice infon-nation, learning about other assessment tools, becoming part of a nationwide assessment network, and creating a pro-active assessment environment on its campus through benchmarking. At the beginning of the process, institutional representatives assumed that they would gain the most knowledge from a partner in an industry similar to theirs. As a result, they were somewhat disturbed when the best practice partners selected did not include a representative from the fashion industry. They were especially concerned about going back to campus and convincing their own faculty and staff that SUNY FIT could learn important lessons from organizations such as Raytheon TI System, with an organizational structure and culture so different from their own. Fortunately, it became clear to SUNY FIT's representatives during the project that, while all organizations are in some way unique, the attributes that underlie effective functioning in any organization are quite similar. As such, there is much to gain from examining the best practices of any successful organization.

To use an analogy that is quite consistent with SUNY FIT's academic emphases, all products have distinct characteristics. The characteristics that make any product successful in the marketplace, however, are similar to those of any other product, including a strong marketing strategy, a well-tested product, in-depth knowledge of the consumer, and a successful design, merchandising, and media plan.

Following the completion of the MIPO study, institutional representatives worked with others to develop a sent of recommendations based on the study findings in relation to the use of performance measures, with recommendations classified as relevant to either "Culture Change" or "Structure Change."

Recommendations classified under "Culture Change" included the following proposed actions by SUNY FIT:

- Shifting towards a more client-centered approach with internal clients such as students, faculty, administration and external clients such as alumni, industry representatives, professional liaisons, SUNY System Administration, and Trustees;
- Utilizing benchmarking as a tool to support continuous improvement;
- Developing comparable data that would allow the College to move away from a "culture of victimization" to a "culture of evidence";
- Using performance measure outcomes as the basis for institutional decisions and to achieve better "institutional alignment";
- Using fewer, more carefully-chosen measures; and
- Ensuring that the administrative assessment process be conducted as thoroughly as the academic assessment process.

At the core of the "Structure Change" recommendations was the formation of an Office of Institutional Audit and Advancement. The intended functions of this office would be to transform data into usable information, provide follow-up for support services at the College, assist with the development of SUNY FIT's strategic plan, serve all college constituencies, create a "student opinion lab," and support local assessment and academic program review. It was thought that a separate office, to be directed by an institutional assessment and research professional, would better support college-wide assessment efforts, which in the past were guided by the dean of liberal arts. The recommendation also included the suggestions that this office report directly to the president and be located away from the top administrative offices so that it would be viewed as an independent, neutral entity.

Other functions of the Office of Institutional Audit and Advancement would be to redirect the measurement process, link campus assessment efforts, create a sense of security through the development of "transparent" assessment tools, provide open access to data across the campus, provide objective analysis of data, link performance measures to system and process, build common conceptions of processes and outcomes, and most importantly, work to support the change process at SUNY FIT. Ultimately, it is hoped that this office will help to provide a climate of trust with respect to assessment and evaluation activities.

Following the development of these recommendations, three individuals who had been involved in the MIPO study made presentations on the study and recommendations across campus, receiving an enthusiastic response from faculty and staff. This response resulted in part from the fact that all three presenters were faculty members, and were therefore less likely to be perceived as threatening. Instead, their audiences seemed truly supportive, especially of the recommendations relating to open access to information, the use of clear measures that would yield results pointing to specific actions to be taken, and the utilization of benchmarking to bring about positive change. The presenters

also sent the message that potential obstacles, such as administrative vacancies, a strong union, an overworked faculty, and a large contingent of adjunct instructors, could actually become tools to support change.

To conclude, it is an exciting time at SUNY FIT. With a new president in place, it is a campus ready for change and perhaps able to change in part as a result of its participation in the MIPO study. The benchmarking process is understood and viewed as a positive assessment tool, helping to create an atmosphere of trust and an information-rich environment, as well as a means to gaining a competitive edge. A central question now is: How do those who do it well do it?

Departmental presentations have been going on across the campus, and the five-year department review, which in the past was a tedious task which resulted in a voluminous document, has been transformed into a process consisting of core questions which are applicable across the campus. As a result, usable, comparable data are being produced, resulting in a more level playing field. The faculty certainly have a more positive attitude towards this review process. SUNY FIT is also undergoing a review of its strategic plan, and this review should result in support for positive change. Overall, an enormous amount of knowledge from participation in the MIPO study was gained, notably the idea that sharing information widely reduces misuse and mistrust of that information. Further, moving away from a culture of victimization is a process that takes time to develop, and an information-rich environment is an important first step in that process.

Bringing It All Back Home: Tompkins Cortland Community College

Until 1996, most of the assessment efforts at TC3 were along the traditional lines of higher education. With only a few exceptions, such as the nursing program, there were relatively few internal or external assessments of the efficacy of a student's entire

academic experience. For nursing graduates, their performance on the New York State licensing examination for registered nurses provided solid, externally-validated data that could be used by the faculty.

There had been some efforts to go beyond the standard approach of evaluating the effectiveness of programs by examining student performance in individual courses. These efforts included programmatic assessment of basic skills, alumni surveys, and a more recent attempt to introduce measures of institutional effectiveness. One particularly promising development has been the movement toward a capstone course or experience in individual programs, in order to provide a more comprehensive assessment of student performance majoring in a particular field.

The liberal arts/social science and business administration programs have led the way in this respect. While each of these initiatives has had some positive impact, the College's interest in participating in the ALO study demonstrated the conviction that more needed to be done.

Two of the critically important dimensions of TC3's participation in the ALO study were the involvement and leadership of its chief academic officer and extensive involvement by several faculty members. By participating in all three sessions in Houston and maintaining a steady stream of communication on campus about the initiative, the dean of academic affairs established this project and its subsequent implementation as a prominent element of the future of the Academic Division. In fact, consideration of this project and its implications for TC3's future were the focus of both college-wide semester-opening meetings in August 1998 and the faculty meetings on Fall Day in October. Traditionally, these events have been viewed by the campus as critical elements of the academic year.

Four full-time and one part-time faculty members participated in the ALO project's site visits, and two accompanied the dean to the concluding session in Houston in June 1998. Furthermore, the College Teaching Center, an independent entity for the improvement of teaching run by the faculty, has embraced the

project in collaboration with the dean, thus solidifying the involvement of the faculty in follow-up activities. Those who made the site visits have formed an informal group that has taken the lead in involving other faculty members in assessment activities.

Beginning in fall 1998, faculty members have been given support in the development of means for assessing the outcomes of their courses and programs. One of the instructors of the Social Science capstone course has been provided with a .2 release to lead this initiative by working with colleagues. In addition, the College's new system for planning and budgeting will link funding to learning outcomes, thus both supporting initiatives aimed at improving assessment and rewarding departments that have implemented them effectively. Further, each of the faculty members who took part in site visits has indicated a willingness to work with colleagues in developing evaluation activities. The results of the ALO study will therefore serve as the foundation for many future implementation efforts. The College is committed to the pursuit of its one continuing goal—the development of student learning outcomes—and to the assessment of its effectiveness in achieving that goal.

The latest step in the evaluation of the College's work in outcomes assessment occurred in January 1999, when two members of the Assessment Steering Committee at Sinclair Community College—one of the best practice partners in the ALO study—visited the TC3 campus to meet with individuals and groups to discuss their specific outcomes assessment projects. Early indications are that this consultation has provided the materials and advice needed by several of TC3's staff in their efforts to move forward with assessment.

With the strong support of the Board of Trustees, the president, and the dean of academic affairs, the participation of a high percentage of the full-time faculty, and a clear emphasis on the need to begin at the level of individual academic programs, TC3 has made a substantial commitment to use its experience and learning as part of the ALO project to move dramatically forward

in its assessment efforts. Both the project and the subsequent activities on campus have given members of this academic community both a solid base of knowledge from which to work and a clear sense of direction.

Bringing It All Back Home: SUNY Empire State College

Finding appropriate comparison groups against which to assess the effectiveness of outcomes assessment poses special challenges for SUNY ESC. ESC was founded in 1971 as the alternative institution within the SUNY arts and sciences colleges. Undergraduate academic programs provide individual student degree planning supported by a network of 44 regional locations in New York State, where students work under faculty guidance in independent and small group study, and distance learning options. Students are predominantly working adults enrolled part-time, and nearly all students have acquired prior college credit or college learning from experience. ESC's nontraditional student population and innovative program features are not appropriately assessed through many of the outcomes assessment methods widely used in higher education, leading the College to rely instead on locally-developed methods.

Given the unique attributes of ESC's student population and academic program approach, external validation of outcomes studies has been a key principle in institutional plans for outcomes assessment. Participation in the ALO project was particularly appealing because APQC was conducting the study in collaboration with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning and University of Maryland University College, two organizations that share ESC's emphasis on service to adult learners and assessment of experiential learning.

There were four internal audiences for the benchmarking study: senior administration, the recently constituted Committee on Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, faculty and staff engaged in assessment activities, and the Institutional Steering

Committee for the self-study for Middle States reaccreditation. Representatives from these various audiences participated in the meetings of the benchmarking consortium, particularly in site visits to the best practice partners. Following the conclusion of the ALO study, a task force was set up and charged to develop an updated plan for outcomes assessment and to recommend actions to be monitored by an ongoing committee and administrative support offices.

The best practice partners afforded the opportunity to see mature programs in higher education which have addressed issues of institutionalizing assessment practice. In addition, the best practice programs utilized a range of evaluation instruments, from locally-developed tests to standardized measures. ESC participants noted that there was less attention to the external validation of measures than had been anticipated, with best practice program representatives explaining that faculty and staff frequently respond more positively to the use of locally developed instruments, resulting in closer faculty involvement in the assessment process.

Since the practices of the best practice partners were so varied, the ALO study did not yield a set of prescriptive solutions for ESC to adopt but instead delineated a set of issues to be addressed in developing a workable system. Of particular value for ESC was the fact that best practice partners included corporations and for-profit higher education as well as traditional higher education. Compared to traditional higher education, the corporate and for-profit educational partners achieved a rapid turnaround in the analysis and reporting of assessment findings, in some cases allowing instructors and program directors to receive feedback the day after an assessment instrument had been used. This immediate feedback had the effect of tying assessment closely to the improvement of instruction and program design. These assessments also tended to be fully embedded in the instructional process and relatively unobtrusive, thereby reducing student resistance to assessment.

Participation in the benchmarking study yielded numerous insights that have contributed to current efforts to update ESC's plan for outcomes assessment. The importance of support for faculty ownership of outcomes assessment emerged as a key finding, leading to ESC's recent decision to create a system for involving faculty in outcomes assessment projects through annual postings of "Requests for Proposals" for projects that implement elements of the outcomes assessment plan. These projects would receive support in the form of released time and professional staff assistance. In addition, some of the best practice partners had turned outcomes assessment from a low-profile institutional research function into an academic program feature used to convey the message to students and prospective students that effective assessment contributes significantly to the quality of their education. Consequently, ESC has taken a first step in this direction, developing and distributing to students a brochure that reports the results of one assessment instrument currently in use. As a third example, the ALO study found that mature outcomes assessment programs were related to other efforts to evaluate and improve institutional performance. For ESC, the most compelling example came from a for-profit educational institution which had an extensive and integrated system that combined assessment of learning outcomes with assessment of student satisfaction. This information has lent support to ESC's current efforts to integrate assessment of student learning outcomes with measures of student satisfaction and goal attainment and with indicators of student progress from the institution's academic records database.

In summary, participation in the ALO study was a worthwhile activity for ESC. The study results as well as the interaction within the consortium helped the College to identify issues that must be addressed in its current context. Further, ESC emerged from the study with an expanded understanding of what an effective plan and program for outcomes assessment must include. In the coming months, institutional assessment plans will be evaluated, with the ALO study findings serving to guide in that process. While these findings will have an immediate

application, learning firsthand about benchmarking is expected to have a longer-term influence. Specifically, the basic principle of benchmarking, seeking external points of reference and validation, is one already adopted for ESC's future assessment efforts.

Conclusions

Although the four institutions participating in one or both of the APQC benchmarking studies have used their experiences in different ways to stimulate assessment activity on their respective campuses, there are some commonalities. Perhaps most striking, all four colleges have used project participation to call attention to assessment and to open a dialogue across their campuses about assessment and its potential value to their future. A related point is that each of the four schools has gone to considerable effort to involve faculty and staff in the experience, based undoubtedly on the clear message sent by best practice partners that assessment will not succeed if faculty and staff members do not buy into it. In addition, each of the institutions seems to have learned that there must be a clear reward system in place in order to stimulate and maintain interest in assessment. Similarly, institutions must be willing to provide support for assessment in the form of tangible resources.

Other benefits have resulted from participating in the MIPO and ALO projects for these four colleges. For example, they now find themselves part of a nationwide network that connects them with some of the "best assessment" institutions and organizations in the country, as well as some of the premier experts on assessment in higher education today. Access to these institutions and individuals is clearly an invaluable consequence of study participation. Further, the four colleges now make up an "intra-SUNY" network by virtue of their joint work with the APQC studies, and there is every reason to believe this past collaboration bodes well for future cooperative efforts. This extensive experience with assessment may be especially

advantageous and timely given SUNY System Administration's recent interest in and emphasis on performance indicators.

In conclusion, SUNY Cortland, the SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY Empire State College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College have already experienced a number of positive outcomes from taking part in the APQC benchmarking studies, with much of this change taking place in a relatively short period of time. Of course, it is too soon to determine whether or not the experiences will transform these institutions into true "assessment cultures," such as those that exist at places like Truman State University. In fact, true assessment cultures necessarily develop over a long period of time. It is the case, however, that each of the participating institutions finds itself transformed, at least for the time being. More important, each institution has directly witnessed the remarkable changes a college can undergo as a result of having a sound assessment program in place and the profound improvements that can occur in teaching and learning. With considerable effort and some luck, the four participating colleges will be able to institute their own assessment culture in the coming years.

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Comprehensive Change in a Large University

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Introduction: A Brief Institutional Profile

[Celeste E. Freytes]

In 1995, the American Council on Education put out a request for proposals for a project that would be known as the ACE/Kellogg Project on Leadership and Institutional Transformation. The applying institutions were free to identify their own comprehensive change issue and define their leadership needs. The dean for academic affairs of the Río Piedras Campus of the University of Puerto Rico applied to participate in this project, as did academic leaders from 110 institutions of higher education. Only 26 institutions were chosen, including the Río Piedras Campus.

Now, we only had to work purposefully with change, and something like this always falls in the hands of optimistic souls. Never ones to recognize what little we know, we all set sail for a

predictable smooth ride. Right? Wrong! Although the winds of change have been a strong navigational force, the head winds have been quite powerful. Yet, when I was appointed acting dean for academic affairs, in late 1997, I was astonished at the accomplishments and pace of this collaborative effort.

I must briefly tell you that the Río Piedras Campus is a land grant institution with 280 acres of land,150 buildings and more than 20,000 students. A total of 1,500 faculty members help to offer more than 80 different specializations, including 53 master's degrees and nine doctorate degrees. The institutional culture of our campus was characterized by the traditional system of different groups of professors dedicated to their particular projects in their respective disciplines. I think that many were under the impression that this would be one more happy individual effort, where each would contribute their particular disciplinary perspective. But even defining change required careful attention and a great deal of collaborative work. A first effort concerned the identification of the external and internal forces at work on our campus that would influence any change agenda.

Three excellent initiatives were developing in our institution. At the system level, a five-year strategic plan was approved. This comprehensive document was organized in a format and style easily understood and ready to implement, which offered us academic direction and a sense of institutional ownership. At the time, the relationship of the ACE/Kellogg project with this effort was not evident, but in the past year we have all come to marvel at the extraordinary fit between the project and the institutional plans.

At the campus level, a five-year strategic plan was also approved and endorsed by the Academic Senate and the Administrative Board. Also, the Academic Senate had decided to carry out a comprehensive reconceptualization of the baccalaureate program. It is evident that these institutional initiatives set the stage for the ACE/Kellogg Project. In fact, the concepts of change and transformation drew strength from these initiatives, and the

ACE/Kellogg group decided to work closely with the agenda of the reconceptualization of the baccalaureate.

A coordinating committee was appointed and its initial agenda comprised three priority areas which developed into three task forces: Teaching and Learning in the Undergraduate Curriculum, Communicative Skills in Spanish and English, and Academic Support Services. Lately, a fourth task force was formed to study ways of improving quantitative skills in our students. This presentation will discuss the insights and experience with the implementation of the project and how these task forces have begun to transform and strengthen the educational system at the Río Piedras Campus.

Reconceptualizing the Baccalaureate

[Ana Helvia Quintero]

Derek Bok, past President of Harvard University, states in his book *Higher Learning* (1986) that "any college runs a serious risk if it does not undertake a full-blown review of undergraduate education every fifteen or twenty years." The UPR- Río Piedras Campus has indeed reviewed many of its programs in the 50 years of existence of its current undergraduate curricular structure and has received positive feedback with respect to its offerings, both from alumni and their employers. Yet, the structure that has served as basis for all its programs has remained unchanged since 1946. This structure consists of four basic components; general education, the major, individual college requirements, and electives. The set of requirements are very rigid, giving little space for diverse routes in a given concentration or for students interested in crossing disciplines. In November of 1994, while considering a revision of the mission of the general education component, the Academic Senate decided that it was time to make a comprehensive review of the baccalaureate's basic structure. New trends in the world, in our country, as well as new conceptions about the nature of knowledge and learning, require fundamental changes in the way we prepare our students.

In deciding the major focus of change, perennial issues about undergraduate education came to the surface. For example:

- What should be the basic components of a baccalaureate program?
- How should these components be integrated into a coherent program?
- How can breadth be achieved in each student's education.

Together with these issues, some new questions arose. We are living through a period of profound demographic, economic, political and technological change. With the rapid and accelerating advance of technology, the increasing complexity of our political and social problems and the continuous transformation of workplace skills and organizational processes, it is not realistic to think of a person as fully educated for a life-long productive career as the result of any formal degree program. The desire and ability for continuous self-education are thus important traits to be developed in our graduates. These characteristics must be developed and nurtured within the undergraduate programs.

Satisfying the students' diverse needs in a context of profound societal changes and increasing demands also requires a more complex view than the one traditionally held of the education process and of the respective profiles of the different participants, of the organization as a whole, and of the relationships and interconnections among its components.

Knowledge and its boundaries are also undergoing basic changes (Massey, 1995; Wallerstein, 1996). How can institutions structured upon disciplinary departments support explorations that ignore or transgress boundaries? How can you study areas, such as the environment, when the field includes virtually every other field? A neat separation between the disciplines has ended, but the knowledge of how to organize and structure the

educational enterprise so as to promote interdisciplinary conversation and integration has not yet been developed.

Another area that needs to be addressed is the teaching process. New knowledge about how we learn challenges the way we generally teach (Bruner, 1996; Barr and Tagg, 1995; Lakoff, 1987). We must develop new ways of teaching that engage students in genuine communication and in solving both theoretical and real problems, not in filling blanks or memorizing facts. The former helps develop understanding, the latter teaches disconnected facts without meaning.

As we discussed these issues, debates about basic ideas—truth, knowledge, meaning, reason, objectivity and justification (Damasio, 1988; Lyotard, 1988; Rorty, 1979; Smith, 1997), as well as the social mission of our university—came to the fore. So the discussion about reshaping our baccalaureate program has generated some very heated debates in our institution.

A special Academic Senate committee was formed to address these issues. The Committee has 26 members, one faculty, and one student representative from each of the colleges and autonomous schools on campus, and the dean of academic affairs. The Committee goes by the name of the Academic Senate Special Committee for the Reconceptualization of the Baccalaureate.

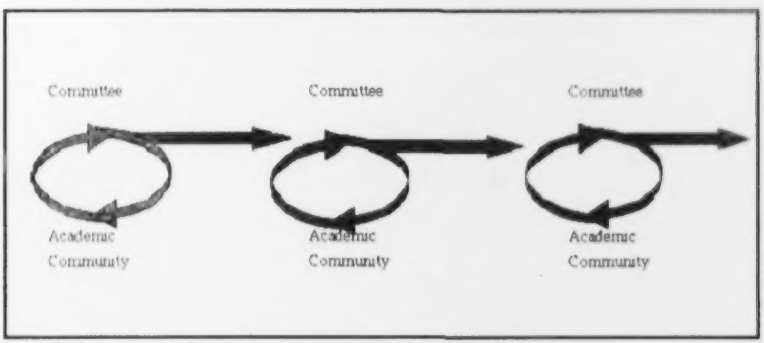
Since the beginning of the process, the Committee understood the daunting complexity and difficulties of the changes being proposed. Basic underlying assumptions on our campus needed to be challenged. These assumptions are embedded in almost all institutional processes, including those that are supposed to produce change. So we needed to develop new change strategies that would promote a fresh look at old problems.

Changes on our campus usually come out of discussions about a specific problem. If we had started discussing the multiple obstacles to the development of a new baccalaureate program, we would have soon been overburdened by the task. So we started discussing our dreams, setting aside the day-by-day difficulties

that often discourage us, and which are the usual topics in the regular change processes. This helped create a new language, new symbols, and attitudes that opened possibilities. Instead of getting stuck in the details of the change, we pursued a general consensus about the nature of the transformation.

The process of discussion also departed from the usual formal style of campus discussions. We recognized the importance of involving all the members of the campus community from the beginning of the discussion. It was not necessary nor desirable to wait until we had a finished product to consult the faculty. We wanted to develop the proposal together with the faculty; the process of discussion being as important as the product. Thus, the discussions followed various cycles of intercommunication between the Special Committee and the academic community in which the Committee, based on its research and discussions, submitted ideas to the community in the form of progress reports, using its feedback to redesign the proposal and submit it for a new round of discussions (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Every step in this process has refined our understanding of the ideal baccalaureate experience that our campus envisions, taking into account institutional resources and framework.

In addition to professors from different colleges, these discussions have also integrated students, librarians, counselors, and administrative personnel. This variety of backgrounds has helped to identify the multiple variables that enter into most university issues and to focus on the campus as a whole, helping to connect the different factors that are interwoven in reality.

During the process a new vision of the relationship between faculty and administrators has developed. Dr. Sandin will expand on this issue during his remarks.

Yet, it hasn't been easy. Many of the usual difficulties associated with comprehensive change (American Council on Education, 1996) were repeated on our campus, for example:

- ***Change provokes fear and anxiety***
  Some professors fear that the courses they have been teaching for years, with limited revisions, will require major changes which they might feel are beyond their competence. For example, it has been suggested that the general education component should include more interdisciplinary courses. This requires either team teaching or a very broad background. Some feel this will alter their usual way of teaching.

- ***Changes threaten the "have-more"***
  Some of the changes under discussion would imply that some courses that are now prescribed will be open to student choice among a set of alternatives. Professors and departments that at present offer the prescribed courses feel that enrollment will go down, and as a consequence departmental positions may be reduced.

- ***People have difficulty seeing the larger picture***
  Professors usually look at situations from their department's perspective. Seldom do they think of the "campus' well-being" as a whole. Even problems that clearly cut across campus lines are looked at in a fragmented way. For example, the advantages of developing communication skills across the curriculum have been made clear, yet at present,

these skills are seen by most professors on campus as the responsibility of the language departments. It is imperative that our efforts have a campus-wide outlook; otherwise, the tendency to look at issues in a fragmented way will work against our objectives.

- ***Comprehensive change requires multiple coordinated transformations***

The academic changes that are being proposed require modification in organizational and governance structures, institutional policies and procedures, redefinition of the various roles and relationships among different groups or individuals, changes in the process of evaluating professors and even in our understanding of the nature of their work. The complexity of such change overwhelms many, who think that this is an impossible dream.

Supporting Comprehensive Change

[Pedro A. Sandín-Fremaint]

It wasn't long after the Academic Senate's momentous decision to reconceptualize the baccalaureate, late in 1994, before we began to suspect that maybe we were indeed involved in an impossible dream. Perhaps our earliest understanding of the process had been along the lines of a comprehensive curricular revision. And we had even entertained thoughts of a ribbon-cutting ceremony that would usher in our new baccalaureate at some point in the near future! But we soon realized that this process would be anything but a linear progression leading to an inauguration of sorts.

The very fact of deciding to start the discussion with our **dreams**, as Dr. Quintero has reported, had a complexity-effect on our agenda. Perhaps it would have been easier to pinpoint the things we didn't like about our current baccalaureate and then set out on a corrective agenda. But we chose to **reconceptualize**—to ignore, as it were, our institutional reality and dream from scratch. We knew that we would eventually need to have our

dreams meet reality. What we didn't know at the start was that this meeting of dreams and reality would be anything but "an afternoon tea."

A first difficulty for the members of the Academic Senate Reconceptualization Committee concerned reaching a consensus with respect to a new baccalaureate, especially in light of the plurality of our dreams in an institution that honors democratic participation and in a process that has been fundamentally faculty-driven. And this difficulty is only compounded when we take into consideration campus-wide opinions. There is substantial agreement, however, on several principles that the Committee has proposed to the academic community as guidelines, and which have been rather well-received. Agreeing on what these guidelines might mean with respect to curricula, however, has been much more difficult. And we have yet to consider fully what these changes might represent in terms of the administrative and bureaucratic structures of our institution!

As Dr. Freytes has reported, the American Council on Education put out a call for proposals, in early 1995, for a project that would come to be known as the ACE/Kellogg Project on Leadership and Institutional Transformation. The ACE's interest was precisely to follow and support a number of institutions in their comprehensive change efforts, in order to learn about institutional transformation in higher education. Dr. César Cordero, then our dean for academic affairs, aware of the complexities involved in our own change initiatives, submitted an application. Out of 110 applicants, 26 institutions were selected, which were assigned to clusters according to their institutional profile. The University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras is one of five urban doctoral institutions participating. A Project Committee was appointed and assigned the responsibility of developing the specific project agenda.

The Project Committee was quick to decide that our agenda should clearly support the reconceptualization process, by far the most important comprehensive change issue on our campus in the past 50 years. It was not quite as easy to agree on the

concrete form that this support would take. The work areas that Dr. Freytes outlined in her introductory remarks were eventually selected because of their relevance to the reconceptualization process and because there seemed to be a clear consensus on campus with respect to the need to address these issues, regardless of other curricular decisions. Actually, the ACE/Kellogg Project, has not only supported our comprehensive change agenda but also allowed us to realize, early on in the process, that our change agenda would have many ramifications. Furthermore, the accomplishments of this project, although still quite modest, have acquired a symbolic importance. They stand as palpable signs of the reconceptualization process and give it credibility.

Professor Haydée Alvarado, a member of the Project Committee and of the task force exploring the ways to strengthen the students' oral and written communication skills, both in Spanish and English, will offer a synopsis of the work done within the three ACE work groups in general, focusing more specifically on her own task force. Allow me now to share with you some of the lessons learned in the development of the ACE/Kellogg Project on our Campus.

Selection of Participants

The selection of participants for this project was not an exercise in democracy. Rather, the members of the Project Committee, as I stated earlier, were appointed by the dean for academic affairs. Much thought was given to the criteria that would be used in selecting these participants. Campus-wide recognition and respect were considered important, as well as previous experience in institutional change efforts. Representation was considered important, particularly in securing a connection with the wider reconceptualization process, as well as some presence from the major colleges on campus. However, much more importance was given to certain personal qualities, such as the capacity to listen and the lack of a compulsion towards what I shall call "protagonism." Actually, one of the most frustrating experiences we have had in one of our task forces can be traced

directly to our failure to give preference to the listening capacity over representativity in a couple of the appointments we made.

Development of Team Ownership over the Change Agenda

This was a particularly important and delicate issue. As I am sure is the case in many other universities, our professors are weary of committee work. On the one hand, little importance is ultimately given to this type of work in the tenure and promotion processes. Furthermore, very few could truthfully attest to the earthshaking importance of what is usually accomplished through committee work, specially when the committee comes into existence through administrative fiat. There can be a great deal of suspicion with respect to the risk of being used or co-opted to serve some hidden agenda. Moreover, legion is the name of those professors who have endeavored to fulfill the objectives of some *ad hoc* committee, only to see their recommendations ignored by decision-makers.

Thus, it was extremely important for us to reassure participants of several things. Firstly, that they were being recruited as experts, entrusted and challenged with an area of concern, and charged with developing their own agenda in order to meet the challenge. I still remember some of the first meetings with the task force members—how they expected us to tell them what they had to do and were surprised to learn that all we had were questions! Secondly, we looked for ways to convey to the task force members that their work was important to us. We asked them to please let us know what they might need in order to do their work. We offered additional pay for each one of the task force coordinators. We assigned funds to make sure that coffee, juice and finger sandwiches were available at special events. We held annual retreats away from campus and invited each participant to attend. And, most importantly, we have given serious and earnest consideration to their recommendations as they have begun to surface. An important example of this is the creation of a Center for Academic Excellence as recommended by the task force dealing with the need to strengthen the teaching-learning experience. As should be obvious by now,

credibility comes with a price. Faculty should not be expected to believe that a certain institutional effort is important if the administration is unwilling to put its money where its mouth is.

Project Continuation during the Summer Session

Many are the institutional projects involving faculty that die off during the summer hiatus never to come back to life! And again, success over this danger entails a price. We can hardly expect faculty to give up their summer out of pure and unadulterated generosity. In order to ensure project continuation, we offered the task forces the option of applying for what we call Summer Initiatives, an institutional program that allows us to pay faculty for special projects during the summer session. The task force dealing with the need to strengthen the teaching-learning experience applied for this program in order to write the proposal for the creation of the Center for Academic Excellence. Without this opportunity, the creation of the Center might not have been accomplished as quickly as it was.

The Contribution of Inter-institutional Visits

One of the nicest outcomes of our participation in the ACE/Kellogg Project has been the development of inter-institutional friendships. Getting to meet colleagues involved in efforts similar to our own has been invaluable! For reasons that remain partially unexplained, we struck a specially close friendship with the folks at Portland State University. Since the onset of the Project, PSU has sent a team of project members to our campus and we have had two teams visit their campus. These visits have been particularly useful in terms of the creation of our Center for Academic Excellence which has been modeled after PSU's own Center.

One of the most valuable aspects of our last visit to PSU, as we went from one meeting to another, was to discover how the folks there are using what we might call a common lexicon in speaking about their work and their institution. "Scholarship of teaching" was an expression that surfaced many times, along with the

concepts of "assessment" and "culture of evidence." "Scholarship of administration" is a newcomer that seems to be gaining some currency. Discovering this common lexicon, which is not to imply that there is any more unanimity at PSU than in our institutions, led us to ask ourselves and others how this had come about, which in turn led us to conceptualize better what the role of the administration might be in institutional transformation. As we learned, Dr. Michael Reardon, Provost at PSU, is to be credited with the development of a new scholarly environment that has given these concepts much of their currency on campus.

There is no doubt in our minds that the ACE/Kellogg Project, by focusing on discrete and manageable issues within a comprehensive change agenda, has served well the process of reconceptualization of the baccalaureate on our campus. As I stated before, this project has given visibility and credibility to the wider process and has helped us to keep our faith in the possibility of transformation in our institution.

Communication Skills in Spanish and English across the Curriculum

[Haydée Alvarado-Santos]

> The world is too much with us, late and soon
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers
>
> — *William Wordsworth*

Working at the University of Puerto Rico's Río Piedras Campus and observing many of my colleagues work has often brought, unbidden, a paraphrase of these well-known lines to my thoughts:

> Teaching and researching are too much with us, late and soon
> Grading and publishing, we lay waste our powers

Teaching, researching, grading, and publishing are our very reason for being, academically-speaking. Sometimes, however, they occupy so much of our time that we forget we have just as

important a commitment to the institution itself and to our students.

Then, in late 1994, reconceptualization came on the scene, and in early 1995, the ACE/Kellog Project. A closer look at this project will serve as an illustration of what my colleagues have presented thus far concerning the process of institutional transformation.

The ACE/ Kellogg Project offered a special opportunity to 35 members of the UPR-Río Piedras Campus community who could not—in spite of all the teaching, researching, grading, and publishing—remain unmoved regarding some of the major needs which have haunted the campus for quite some while; they were offered the opportunity to do something specific about these concerns, join yet another committee. However, this time it wasn't being called a "committee" but a "task force"—much more sophisticated. Furthermore, as Dr. Sandín reported about the Project Committee itself, one was neither elected or designated to the task force, but "invited." The other "invitees" or guest came from other colleges on campus, mutual strangers, one would say; in addition, the needs to be addressed were expressed in extremely broad and ambitious terms, as demonstrated in the name of each of the group, and finally, we were supposed to figure out our agenda for ourselves. With so many positive elements going for us, how could we possibly refuse?

Surprisingly, most of those invited said yes. Perhaps what attracted us was the very fact that we would be working with strangers, not with our friends in the department or college. We were already convinced that theses were issues which needed to be addressed at the campus level, not just locally. Perhaps the attraction lay in the awareness that for the first time, the issues had been formulated within the context of their interconnectedness. Long experience has taught me that, too often, isolated solutions have no lasting effect. One can freely admit to being proud of the way individual students have attained the academic objectives established for a particular course, semester or year, while at the same time confessing to utter

frustration because the problem is still there for most students and, worse, will continue to be there because it hasn't been dealt with adequately, which means institutionally, inter-related, synergistically, if you will. I believe that each professor in the group overcame his or her initial caution because of a conviction that the larger process of reconceptualizing the baccalaureate provided an excellent excuse for taking concrete action toward solving a discrete problem they have been worrying about, individually, for years. The selection of these specific areas by the Project Committee was the clicking factor in our decision.

Three years later, however, we have not arrived at a final solution for all the three areas. A closer look at each group might prove useful in generating guideline for similar projects.

Group I: The Undergraduate Learning/Teaching Experience

Group I, eight professors from five Colleges, jelled quickly and established a very close working relationship. They would meet, off-campus, on their own time, to work on their major document, *Towards a Learning Community*. They also hit upon the idea of Pedagogical Fridays, almost immediately. One Friday morning, every month, professors would be invited to a workshop or panel presentation on a specific teaching/learning issue. This strategy served as a trial run for one of the mechanism that will be part of the Center for Academic Excellence, and it helped pave the way for the document itself, which was distributed later on, thus contributing to a wider awareness of and receptivity to what would be presented in it. This document was then presented to small groups in the campus community and the feedback from these groups was used to revise the next draft. The final version was presented last August. Currently, the group is working on the development of institutional plan for implementing the concept of "the community of learning." Members of the group have attributed part of their success to their participation in an AAHE Quality Academy in Breckenridge, Colorado, in the summer of 1996 and to their close encounter with the Portland State University's ACE team.

Group II: Communicative Competence in English and Spanish across the Curriculum

Group II presents a different picture altogether. About five professors came to the meeting that launched the task forces. Eventually, the group grew to a membership of 15 professors from six languages departments in different colleges, one of which was foreign languages, three Natural Sciences departments and the School of Education and Public Communication.

As a result of this mixed bag in its membership, group members were forced to listen to each other. It spent the whole first semester just taking. Discussions ranged (and raged, sometimes, though not too violently) far and wide. Language development, university standards, personal experiences with the teaching and learning of languages, teaching strategies and techniques, the organization of curricula, students' perceptions and feeling, and specific recommendations were only some of the topics. Any issue one could conceivably relate to the development of communicative competence—which includes not just speaking and writing but listening and reading[1]—came up in the discussion. Our preconceived notions and biases necessarily weakened as a result of our conversations.

By the end of the first semester, however, the group decided to go public. One of the assumptions which guided our conversations had been that the issue was so important, its nature and reality so complex, that no one group, whose representativity no one could vouch for in the first place, should come up with the "solution." We decided to take the issue itself, not our recommendation to the academic community. The three campus wide "mini-encounters"[2] that took place during the second

1 These are just the tip of the iceberg; for how can one exclude reasoning, among other aspects of the communicative process?

2 These were: Defining the problem; Addressing the problem: The State of the Situation; and New Solutions and Options, held respectively in February, March, and April of 1997.

semester had the express purpose of bringing professors from all walks of campus life into our conversation. We reasoned that if language and communicative competence are so often inseparable from academic performance, then all professors concerned with improving academic performance across the curriculum should: first, become aware of the importance of language and communicative competence; and second, come to ffeel responsible to some degree for ensuring that their students evidence adequate communicative skills.

We thought of this as making language "visible" in the curriculum.

The turnout for the encounters was **not** overwhelming, but the results were more than satisfying. We had achieved our purpose: the word was out. The importance of language and our students' abilities to listen, to read, to speak, and to write coherently, even cogently, were no longer to be assumed, or deplored, but to be discussed, compared, and defined, and strategies for their development recommended and implemented.

At that point, May 1997, the group decided to get specific. It documented the conversation that had taken place in a booklet *Communicative Competence for a New Baccalaureate* (UPR-Río Piedras, 1997) which was distributed in the language departments and to other interested professors in the fall of 1997 and it "adopted"[3] an experimental semi-immersion in English program for students whose proficiency was inadequate for academic task.

3 I used the word "adopted" advisedly; the history of the project is long and convoluted but its implementation coincided with the moment of which I am speaking. Looking for a specific project, the group thought that taking advantage of this was its legitimate good fortune

Group III: Academic Support Services

At the beginning of the fall 1996 semester, the first official semester for the groups, Group III was quite focused on its issue, which dictated, to a large extent, who should be included in this task force as well as its agenda and activities. Group III has produced two major instruments and concomitants reports aimed at improving support services, specifically registration processes and academic advising. Both processes reflect and contribute to a factor I haven't mentioned, but which always play a major role in all transformation processes: campus culture. Group III, however, has been the one most directly battling our campus culture and the one which has most suffered from it. The very specificity of its task, the fact that several of its members, precisely because of their institutional commitments and commitment were too busy to continue, have led the group coordinator to recommend that the group reorganize its efforts during this semester.

However, a new group has been born.

Group IV: Quantitative Reasoning Across the Curriculum

Group IV, has decided to take on the issue of quantitative reasoning across the curriculum. From what I have heard from its coordinator, some of the issues are very similar to those of Group II dealt with, in reference, of course, to quantitative reasoning not to language. Although, isn't math a language?

At the beginning of this year, most members of the original task force felt that after three years, we have moved forward in our efforts to ensure conditions, mechanisms, and attitudes that will improve the undergraduate teaching/learning experience; will create more effective ways for our students to develop communicative competence; and will change campus culture in ways that will not hinder, but provide support for, academic performance.

The experience of the specific groups confirms the generalizations my colleagues have presented. Of these, I find the following the most pertinent to the work the three groups accomplished:

- **Allowing each group to develop its working strategies and to work at its own rhythm is crucial.**

If an institution decides that the **process** of institutional change is just as important as the product, then freedom—to talk, to regroup—is not negotiable. If each group had been forced to hand in a "semester progress report," very little would have been accomplished. As it was, each group did produce documents which have been widely discussed by the academic community, and all of the issues are still alive. A three-year life span for academic issues on campus is almost unheard of.

- **Interconnecting issues is of prime importance.**

Isolating issues is conterproductive. Improving the way communication skills are developed cannot be done unless teaching/ learning practices change, not just individually, not just locally, but campus-wide. Neither will it improve unless students register painlessly in the appropriate sections, knowing why they're there and not somewhere else. And, definitely, the situation concerning communicative competence will never improve if language requirements are determined solely on the number of credits students take for graduation purpose. Incorporating projects with similar objectives also works, as was the case with the semi-immersion experiment in English, whose origin was independent of and previous to the ACE/Kellogg Project itself.

- **Institutional support must go beyond providing the minimum** (time, place and sustenance).

Support should include exposure to other perspectives, other experiences, as was the case with Group I. Providing support based on the idiosyncratic needs of each group also proved wise; some projects were worked on as part of summer

initiatives while semester-load-reduction provided space for others.

In conclusion, I must report two minor, but earthshaking, for us, events in campus. The chairs of at least two of the campus English departments have begun talking to each other before the event, in an effort to collaborate on specific issues. This incipient practice constitutes a major change in departmental behavior. The other is that the Spanish sub-component of Group II is working on a document which will present specific recommendations to the campus. One can think of these minor achievements as the ripple effect generated by creating conditions which promote collaborative work by people from all over campus on issues affecting all sectors of the college, departmental, or even strictly disciplinary committees.

Cautiously but hopefully, we approach the next stage of the projects.

A Metareflection on Institutional Change

[Pedro A. Sandín-Fremaint]

The trend in many American universities is towards a professionalization of academic administration. And there are good arguments in favor of that trend. Also, academic careers seem to be perceived from the perspective of the discipline rather than from an institutional perspective. In our case, however, because of complex factors that include geographical and political considerations, we tend to conceive our career as one of service to our particular institution; a service that will often include stints in administrative positions. You would think that this *modus operandi* would provide for more cordiality and understanding between faculty and administration. After all, we are one and the same! Alas, such is not the case! There is as much a tendency towards distrust between faculty and administration in our institution, as in any American university.

At the onset of the reconceptualization process and of the ACE/Kellogg Project, I was associate dean for academic affairs

of the Río Piedras Campus. As I speak to you today, I am back in the classroom; yet I continue to coordinate the ACE/Kellogg Project. This has provided the ideal laboratory for a reflection on the relation between faculty and administration and their respective roles in institutional change processes.

It is my belief that the primary role of the administration in an institution of higher education is fully to understand the **mission** of that institution, to translate it into a **vision** that resonates with the dreams of the academic community, and to facilitate the processes that will move the institution in the direction of its mission. Everything in the institution, very especially bureaucratic procedures, should be evaluated in the light of its contribution to the mission. Nothing can be more frustrating than to run into processes and procedures that act as obstacles to the very mission of the institution and that seem to be nonetheless so entrenched as to resist all attempts at change. There is something contradictory, to give you a simple example, in having the lawn mowed during class hours in an educational institution.

The administration must not spare any effort to have each and every member of the academic community know and understand the vision and the mission of the institution, as well as its operational structures. And community members must be given a margin of discretion in order to fine tune their work to the mission. Actually, a combination of high responsibility, lack of knowledge of the mission, and total lack of decisional or discretionary power can be a terrible formula. The more responsible an employee is, in such a scenario, the more he or she will insist that each and every one of the 12 colored copies of a document must be provided, regardless of the actual use and value of the pink, the orange and the blue-green copies in a given case. In other words, work must be made meaningful through reference to the mission if we are to avoid the dangers of what one might call "bureaucratic idolatry."

It is the administration's role to recruit us to participate in institutional change and to facilitate this participation. It is not the administration's role to effect change unilaterally. Actually,

my experience at UPR has been that change agendas imposed by administrative fiat rarely, if ever, come to fruition. This is particularly true of institutions with a tradition of democratic participation. No one ever said that democracy was easy nor terribly efficient and timesaving! But we all know how scary the alternatives can be!

When the administration recruits members of the academic community to participate in change efforts it must convey a sense of trust and it must concede the necessary space for each player to do his or her part. In other words, the administration should resist the temptation to direct or control all of the processes necessary to attain change. On the contrary, it must be on the lookout for any and all efforts on campus that are akin to the goals of the change process, and claim them and support them as part of that process. It should invite the academic community—faculty, students, non-teaching staff—to put to good use their talents to construct the maps for change. Several maps, not a single one, will come out of this process, and it is the administration's job to help harmonize these maps. Comprehensive change is like putting together a puzzle whose pieces we must cut ourselves as we move along, in order to have them fit into each other.

Furthermore, the administration must be willing to support, financially, the efforts that move in the direction of the desired change. To sound out a call to change, only to pull out as soon as financial support is required and requested is truly a waste of time. We understand that financial resources are limited. It is precisely because they are limited that the way must be found to make sure that the distribution of these limited resources supports the institutional mission and the changes that are deemed necessary to the accomplishment of that mission.

There seems to be a tendency among faculty to confuse the mission of the university with the goals of their particular discipline. This contributes to the difficulty we have in seeing the university as a complex whole that requires our participation and involvement at various levels. There would be no university

without a vigorous disciplinary and interdisciplinary agenda; so much is true. But the university is much more than a group of departments. Faculty must participate actively in change efforts, as much at the departmental and college level as at the institutional level. Regardless of our sociological understanding of the university, whether we perceive it as an organism of sorts, whose parts must harmoniously collaborate with each other, or rather in terms of parts in conflict with each other, we must acknowledge that the institution cannot move in the direction of its mission if we are reduced to a state of internecine warfare or, what amounts to the same, deadly indifference. The ACE/Kellogg Project has been highly instructive and motivational in this respect. It has been wonderful to see so many colleagues from all across campus collaborating towards an agenda of institutional transformation. The administration must remember at all moments that this enthusiasm is directly proportional to the degree of conviction we each hold with respect to the way our recommendations will be ultimately received. It must also remember to find concrete ways of signifying that this work is indeed valuable. We cannot recruit faculty for a job we say is important, only to disregard their effort when the time comes for public recognition and—why not—tenure and promotion.

Faculty must continue to exercise our traditional critical function, which we do so well. Yet, I believe that we need to develop critical modes that are less adversarial. We must resist anything that we feel sure attempts against the university's legitimate vocation, even as we are willing to modify the way we understand that vocation. A case in point, with respect to UPR, might be the TQM movement which has been promoted by the presidency during the past few years. To reject TQM wholly and denounce it as a neoliberal strategy, without examining the ways in which this organizational philosophy might help us improve certain aspects of our performance as an institution, seems to me to be wrong. I, for one, will continue to reject the metaphor of the client in my understanding of my relationship with my students. But I admit that much would improve if certain operations in

campus, such as admissions or registration, would view the students as clients who have a right to the best service we can offer them.

Faculty must believe that our participation can indeed produce change. One of the lessons learned from our experience in the ACE/Kellogg project is that the very process of intense and respectful conversation and reflection contains the seeds for transformation. In this sense, there is perhaps nothing more subversive than widening the circle of our conversation. But we must be willing to talk to each other beyond the difficulties and the differences. Our greatest danger is perhaps that we might abort the process before it reaches the point of true fruition.

Lastly, we must seriously reconsider—and this is so specially true for UPR—the faculty-administration relationship itself. And we must begin precisely by questioning the neat distinction between the two. I personally would need to succumb to schizophrenia if I were to entertain a Manichaean understanding of the faculty-administration relationship! There is no doubt that the functions of a person involved in academic administration may at times be in conflict with the functions of a professor. Nor is there any doubt that the conversations necessary to deal through such a conflict must at times be quite energetic and trying. But we cannot continue to view the colleague in the administrative position as a transubstantiated being, incapable of understanding us; just as we cannot perceive the professor who comes to us with a critical and difficult issue as an irresponsible ignoramus, incapable of understanding the exigencies of running a department, a college, or a campus. We must labor to examine the conflict with an open mind and with an honest effort to understand the other person's view. The tendency to perceive the other as an adversary is perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to institutional transformation.

[Anna Helvia Quintero]

There is no doubt that the change we are envisioning for our campus is not easy to attain. Yet, we have taken steps in that

direction. Our initial decision to start with our dreams was the right one. Starting with the possibilities instead of the problems has given positive energy to our project. Many share our dream. Even if they are skeptic of its feasibility, they are sympathetic to our objectives. The campus sees us as "Quixotes," a metaphor that was used by professor Marvin Lazerson (1996) to describe our project, but they are willing to give us a chance—something that, for years, had not happened on our campus.

Having the big picture at hand, our dream, helps to create a new language and perspective that sheds new light on many initiatives. Indeed we are seeing changes in the way problems are looked at. For example, a more flexible attitude towards heterogeneous ways of attending to the students' diverse needs is being developed in the Academic Senate, as well as in many colleges. A new proposal for organizing the baccalaureate program in the Business College offers more space for taking courses in other colleges, depending on the student's interests. Initiatives for the improvement of teaching strategies have increased due to reconceptualization debates and the creation of the Center for Academic Excellence.

Debates, some of which have been going on for years, acquire a new perspective under the reconceptualization movement. For example, members of the English departments at the Humanities and General Studies colleges have been talking about new ways of serving students whose English competencies are at the beginner's level, even though English is taught in our schools from the first grade. Through the ACE project, this initiative has become more prominent on campus as it promotes connections and networking which were more difficult when it was attempted by a group of professors. Also, as professor Alvarado has said, some professors see the reconceptualization process as a "good excuse for taking action towards dealing with a discrete problem."

The discussion of new alternatives also promotes the questioning of many practices that have been traditionally taken for granted. For example, in the first Academic Senate meeting of this

semester, the acting chancellor talked of the need to reconceptualize administrative processes so that they be attuned to the new goals and structure of the baccalaureate program.

In December 1997, the Committee submitted a preliminary proposal for campus discussion. The major proposed changes are:

- a more flexible program, giving students more choices and the possibility of different routes within and between academic disciplines; for example, a mathematics student could take a path towards pure mathematics or could combine mathematics and finance;

- opening possibilities for interdisciplinary or thematic studies;

- a new general education component which runs along the four years of college (at the moment this program is concentrated in the first two years) and which is better connected with the student's area of study;

- more connections among the various components of the baccalaureate; and

- new ways of teaching that engage students in genuine communication and in solving both theoretical and real problems.

In the process of discussing the proposal, we made a major shift in our strategy that I think has been fundamental to the possibility of attaining our goal. The shift was promoted from our learning through the experience in the ACE project. Working in the various ACE initiatives, we saw the importance of interlacing the development of the baccalaureate model with local experiences. Through the various experiences, we saw the variety of paths needed to attain our goal. As professor Alvarado pointed out, in the ACE Project, each group developed its agenda, its working strategy, and rhythm. Far from perceiving

the process as a linear progression that would eventually produce monolithic change, we understood that the real change resulting from this process will probably be approximate, gradual, and uneven, in an asymptotic relationship with the understanding of the ideal baccalaureate experience that will emerge from the process. In this sense, important issues which have been the focus of campus-wide discussions are being addressed in the new revision proposals submitted to the Senate.

The development of a new baccalaureate program takes time. The pace of change in the conceptions held by different sectors of the campus is different. The faith in the process of those more open to change starts to weaken as they await for the seemingly endless rounds of discussions to take place. The initiatives that are taken by parallel groups help develop a sense of progress. Changes, promoted by these initiatives as well as by the new perspective open by the reconceptualization process, can be perceived and the credibility of the process is being enhanced. The campus wide process is noticeably becoming institutionalized at other levels. The more holistic view of the educational process, its goals and means, I would say, is already a noticeable outcome of the reconceptualization process.

The initiatives also provide the opportunity for learning. Practice is not seen as a mere application of theory but as an opportunity to develop theory. Indeed as time passes, we see the reconceptualization of the baccalaureate more as a process than as a product, a process that, by integrating the variety of efforts of different groups and by helping to develop connections and networks among them, permits an ample participation of the university community in a very complex change process that no one can control but in which we can all participate. So the reconceptualization, far from being an Academic Senate project, becomes a campus project, promoted by many actors working under the spell of a dream.

Conclusion

[Celeste E. Freytes]

Our conclusions, recommendations and reflections are closely associated with the theme of this conference: Innovation for Strength. Yet I will focus on what gives strength to our innovation process. Some of the unique characteristics of the groups at work in the ACE/Kellogg Project, that give strength to our change efforts, are:

The Process. Most committee members are present at all meetings. The first five minutes of warm-up always include expressions of how inconvenient the time and hour of the meeting is and of all the other very important work that we have. From there it's to the news of the week, and at exactly 10 minutes of this introduction, the collective inner clock urges us to begin with the topic at hand. Tasks and work that needs to be done start flying in the atmosphere, and ideas, reports and opinions are runner-ups at this time.

The People. We must repeat and emphasize that project participants come from different academic and professional backgrounds. This diverse composition could heighten any administrator's fear of even bringing them together for a meeting; but for some unknown reason, it worked. Difference, in this case, includes professors with different types of appointments, administrators, students, and a diversity of academic backgrounds (such as the humanities, education, social science, natural science, and business administration).

Enthusiasm and commitment to the institution are the common denominators that underscored the meetings. In many ways, all the members are sensitive to the different topics discussed. They listen attentively to each other and follow with specific questions. The style is totally non-judgmental.

The Time. All project participants are persons who in many ways enrich campus life in other areas. All are extremely busy and at some point have indicated that they do not have the time for one

more responsibility, just at the precise moment when they take on yet another task. But all tasks are completed on time.

The Philosophy. Project participants are student oriented. Topics are discussed according to the impact they have on student learning. Specific concerns about classroom environment are viewed with a serious attitude.

The Documents. Conversations and project meetings do not preclude the production of written materials that are shared with the campus community. Maybe the fact that periodic reports have to be submitted to the ACE has helped emphasize the importance of written information. Yet, the documents focus ideas and send an important message to the campus community: "We are interested in your opinions." And we all know how little it takes for the academic community to shed its shy veil and share what is on their minds. At times it may be in order to disagree strongly, or to congratulate us for the effort; yet all opinions are received with interest and are facilitated by the existence of written materials.

The Initiative. When production is in high gear, which is every other day, and the days in between every other, the achievements spill into other areas. As a result of the work done in this project:

- A professor of Chemistry was nominated and received the distinction of 1998 Professor of the Year by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

- The Center for Academic Excellence was created and is now a reality, with office space, a secretary and two co-directors.

- A second, follow-up proposal to the ACE has been accepted.

- This presentation was submitted and accepted for the Middle States conference on "Innovation for Strength."

The Reflection. Dreams and strategic plans are always seen at opposite ends of a continuum. It is unique to be a part of the strength that is produced when the two meet. Most of us had the crazy, unconfirmed idea that we were heading in the right direction. These longitudinal efforts confirm that we are. We are right where we need to be, achieving our mission and giving presence to our vision, which is: "An international university that, learning from its past, transforms the present to change the future."

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State University Systems at the Crossroads

The University of Puerto Rico and the State University of New York

UPR Responds to Constant Global Change

Norman I. Maldonado
President, University of Puerto Rico

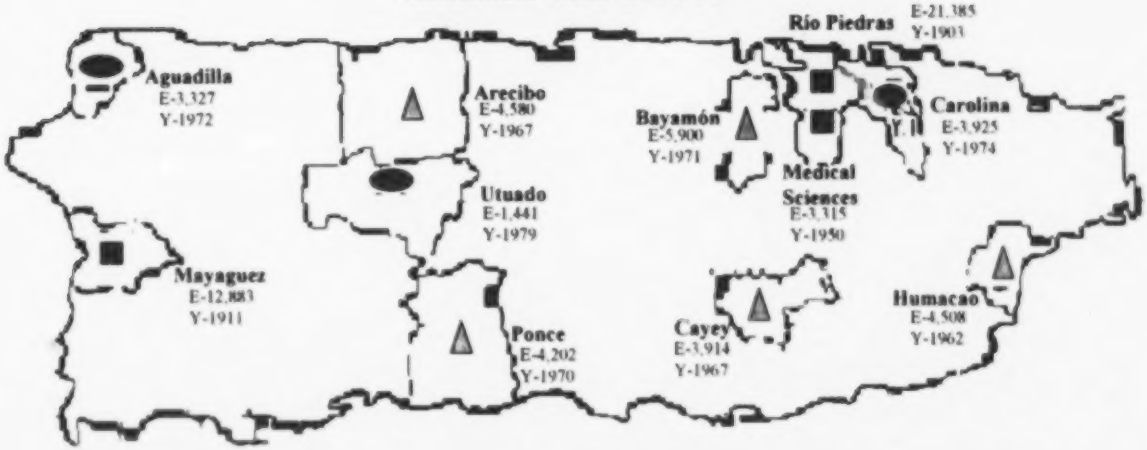
The University of Puerto Rico is the premier Hispanic institution in the nation. It has served well our community and also the Caribbean and Latin America. Now there are new challenges, and the University must be engaged in a different way in a globalized world in constant change.

Evolution of the University of Puerto Rico System

The University of Puerto Rico (UPR) started as a teachers college in 1903, adding an Agricultural and Mechanical Arts college in 1911. The gradual expansion of academic programs centered on the concept of a main campus in San Juan and a secondary campus in Mayagüez, which operated as a semiautonomous campus until 1966. The School of Medicine was inaugurated in 1950 as a non-autonomous unit. However, the modern University system was created in 1966, when the three units were granted autonomy, and a central administration was established to coordinate the system. Thirty-two years later, there are still tensions.

University of Puerto Rico

Academic Year 1998-99



Four Year and Graduate Programs Campuses

Four Year University Colleges

Two Year Regional Colleges

E - Enrollment

Y - Year each unit began operations

Figure 1

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The 1960s marked a second stage in UPR's development, when a system of regional colleges was established. This meant that academic programs could be offered closer to the people being served, the University would be able to serve more people without establishing one "megacampus" in San Juan, and students would have more choices in academic programs and campus environments.

Today, we are the State University system of Puerto Rico, with 70,000 students, most of whom are traditional undergraduates. We have 4,400 faculty members, and 7,800 administrative staff. Our annual operating budget of $627 million, which includes $547 million from our State government, $80 million from tuition and internally generated income, and an additional $198 million from external funds. With 11 operating units, the UPR is present all over the Island of Puerto Rico (Figure 1), providing a broad range of program offerings from associate degrees to the Ph.D. in almost every field of knowledge. For example, students are able to study the arts, humanities, education, business administration, hotel administration, law, agriculture, the natural sciences, engineering, architecture, technology, and numerous fields in health care, including medicine, dentistry, public health, nursing, and the allied health professions.

Our multicampus system offers many advantages. It provides access and opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to choose between institutions and programs with minimal geographical and demographic inequalities. It facilitates the development of policies that allow student access to the system. It enables us to establish a uniform system of accountability to the citizens, assuring them that their tax dollars are well spent through our review of programs and standards to ensure quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.

In addition, the system units are able to differentiate between themselves, in terms of their mission and areas of emphasis, and they can serve broader population needs while reducing competition between the units. A system provides a single point of contact with state and federal governments, reducing

competition and the neutralization of efforts when asking for funds or to sponsor special activities. Resources are also pooled under one corporate umbrella to facilitate the financing of capital improvements. Finally, the financial stability of the system helps bond ratings.

The roles of the president and the Central Administration, by law, are to integrate the system, be responsible for systemic planning, allocate financial and other resources through the budget, search for resources and identify opportunities for development, and serve as the official spokesperson for the institution.

Current System Priorities

We have a number of priorities within the University system. These include strategic planning, responding to the needs and expectations of our external constituency, systemic reform, concerns about privatizing the public health care system, distance learning, developing partnerships with other higher education institutions, and controlling our internal costs.

In our strategic planning process, we retained external consultants during the brainstorming phase and had considerable input from the institutional units. Each institutional unit develops its own strategic plan, which must be articulated with the system plan, taking into consideration the local mission, goals, and objectives. Further, each department develops its own strategic plan that is articulated with the institutional plan. This process enables us to identify critical areas that need improvement, forces us to look at ourselves from a different perspective, and ensures that funding is prioritized according to the overall strategic plan.

In an effort to respond to the needs and expectations of our external constituents, we were able to establish a systemwide science and technology policy, following the initiative of our state government policy, which described strategies and action plans for achieving progress in these areas.

A systemwide intramural professional practice plan enables faculty and staff to provide services to govenunent and industry as part of their regular work schedule, while receiving additional income for the effort. Although legislative action was necessary to establish the plan, it made the human resources of the University available to serve the needs of our external community, while providing practical experience to faculty and students.

The undergraduate transfer policy was overhauled to promote articulation between transfer programs and receiving-end programs, eliminating internal barriers to the transfer process and establishing course equivalency between system units.

The University has had a single admission application for high school students since the 1970s, but the admissions process for freshmen was reengineered to strengthen the high school advising, offering workshops for high school student advisors, hosting open houses and campus visits, coordinating visits to schools by our admissions staff, and sponsoring exhibitions in shopping malls and at conferences. These activities encouraged more students to submit applications, especially among lower income students in public schools, and it forced us internally to examine how resources were used in order to accommodate more students.

Systemic reform was also important to us. We developed a number of initiatives to strengthen the University system. For example, in developing our policies, we looked at the system as a whole while allowing some space for the individuality of various units. Total quality management practices were instituted, administrative processes were reengineered, and strategic plans were required for the system, as well as its units and departments (Figure 2).

The local movement toward privatization may have an impact on the public health care system on the Island, and this is of some concern to us. It may reduce the sites available for clinical practice, because private health care providers are not required to take interns. On the other hand, our Medical School needs the

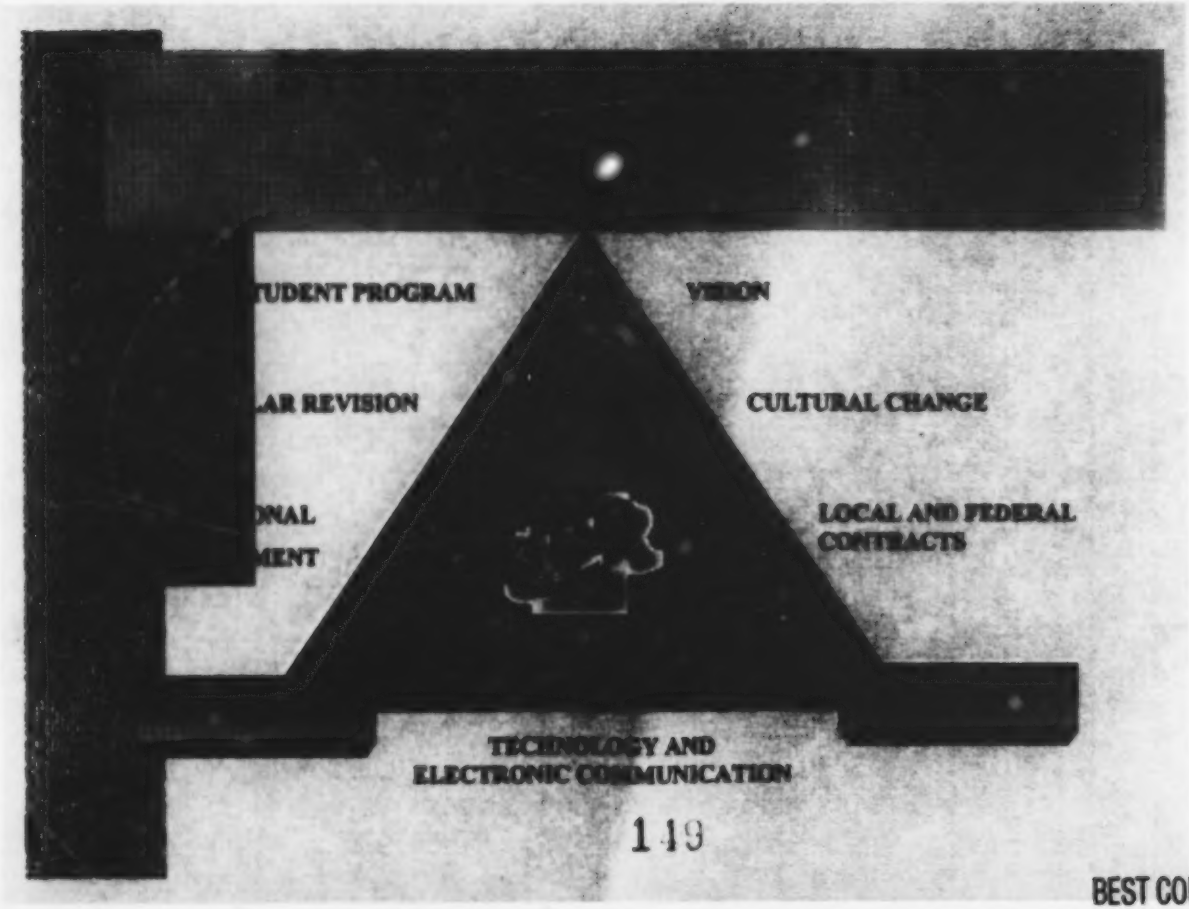

Figure 2

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assurance of having enough clinical practice positions for its students. Therefore, we are in the process of purchasing a regional hospital to assure the availability of a clinical training facility for our students.

Distance learning provides us with an opportunity to reach new populations, such as adults in the workplace, and to expand academic course options to traditional students at our system units. To make this goal a reality, we upgraded our telecommunications network to provide the additional capacity we need, and appointed a new systemwide coordinator for distance learning. Electronic classrooms are being built at some of the institutional units, and eventually all units should have at least one electronic classroom. The University also joined the Hispanic Educational Telecommunication System (HETS) as a Charter Member.

It is important for us to develop partnerships with other higher education institutions and with industry. Participation in the Universities and Research Institutes of the Caribbean (UNICA), in national associations, and in international events such as the Guadalajara Book Fair are examples of some of these partnerships.

Controlling our internal costs is yet another priority. Although UPR has benefited from an ever increasing income derived from a formula based on the general tax revenue, but times are changing. As everywhere, government has other uses for its money, and tax revenues are increasing at a slower rate due to tax reform. Before 1981, tuition at UPR was $15 per undergraduate credit. Since 1991, it has been held to $3 0.

Central Administration and Individual Campus Tensions

Some university systems have been established to integrate existing institutions, but the UPR system evolved from the expansion of a dominant campus into satellite units. The concept of a system was established in 1966, and there has been a long history of ever-growing demands for campus autonomy in decision making. An adversarial relationship tended to flourish

under this scenario, and 32 years later, some resentment remains. For example, older units still feel that they lead the system and that the best solution to a problem is theirs, whereas younger units feel that there are other ways of accomplishing the same objectives.

The University is adapting to changes in student demographics and student preferences. The high school population continues to increase, but there are also additional pressures from adults who are seeking education to advance their careers. There appears to be a decreased interest in associate degree programs, at least for the type of students that UPR is attracting, and a trend toward academic programs that have clear linkages with the job marketplace. There is a strong demand for professional, scientific, and engineering programs, but the faculty has been slow to accept the fact that some other traditional disciplines are in low demand.

We are experiencing a "drift" among younger colleges toward higher level academic offerings. Some undergraduate program duplication has been allowed in disciplines where demand clearly exceeds capacity. In addition, smaller or younger units want to provide as many academic programs as do larger units, and some of these smaller units even want to offer graduate level programs. The existing larger and more senior units do not appreciate this ambition, considering it as a threat to their standing in the higher education community and a potential cause of a reduction in funding. On the other hand, the communities surrounding our units expect their local college to mature and become a full-fledged campus.

Unfortunately, some of our units seem to prefer not to be supervised, and the issue of centralization versus decentralization does raise questions of accountability. Some of our constituents feel that good news should come from the campus, but bad news should come from the central administration.

Indicators of System Effectiveness

The success of any set of system-wide indicators of system effectiveness depends on both technical and political issues. First, whatever is used as an indicator should depend on data that are measurable at a reasonable cost and should be as unbiased as possible. Second, the set of indicators should produce measures that are reasonably easy to understand by people outside the institutional research community and must correlate to societal expectations. Ignoring this issue will produce more historical data to file away and information that is not useful for the decision-making process.

Although we have made good progress toward a consensus on what constitutes program effectiveness, the issue of system effectiveness is less clear. Through system-wide committees of institutional researchers, there is agreement on basic issues, such as the definition of data elements and data collection procedures, and we are in the process of strengthening our institutional research capabilities, both at the campus and system levels. The question of which is the best set of indicators for system effectiveness is still under discussion, because each institutional unit has its own distinctive issues and biases.

There are two views of what is "system effectiveness." One way of looking at it is to consider the whole set of units as a single mega-campus that offers a wide variety of academic programs and services. Performance measurements used to analyze a campus can be used to understand the behavior of the system. In those instances where the same program is offered at more than one location, comparisons can be made between units. However it is very important to realize that although the two program offerings may have the same set of objectives, both may be operating under different campus environments.

Effectiveness indicators derived under this model are better used to compare the institution against its history. Although it is possible to compare our system with other state university systems, we must remember that these organizations operate under quite different legal, financial, and historical backgrounds.

Another way of looking at the issue of "system effectiveness" that is intriguing, at least in our case, is to ask the question: How do we know that the institutional units are more effective operating as a system, rather than operating as independent entities?

This is hot topic in our system environment. Some sectors of the academic community at one of our units contend that being part of the system limits their development, because most local problems have their roots at the central system administration. They would place the burden of the proof at the central level, not with the unit.

Indicators of system effectiveness under this perspective are those that provide some measure of the result of system actions. These are activities that a system administration can perform efficiently that would be difficult or costly to implement at each individual unit, regardless of its size.

Unfortunately, law and tradition usually dictate the roles of the individual units and the system administrators, not as the result of a thorough design of what a system should do. However, system administrators may have to begin looking at the issue, because as effectiveness indicators are applied to the individual campus activities and their measures become part of the resource allocation process, the central administrators will be asked to justify their existence.

If we accept the view that a system is a big campus, one that includes every academic and research program offered by the individual units, it may be necessary to identify proxy indicators for program effectiveness. As such, system effectiveness could be viewed as the aggregate result of all unit activities.

We are considering a number of indicators for academic and research programs. Among the academic indicators are the ratio of admitted to enrolled students, retention rates, graduation and placement rates, the average cost per FTE, and the average cost per diploma. Research indicators include the evaluations of external reviewers, the quality and quantity of publications, the

level of external fimding, patents and intellectual property revenues, student participation, workload allocation to research activity, the space utilized for research and development purposes, and the average cost per publication.

The University of Puerto Rico has increased its student body by approximately 25 percent in the past four years, responding to an increase in demand and the availability of additional resources. Using total quality management, reengineering of the process, and a well-designed strategic plan, the University has undergone a reform aimed at better serving our students and our community. Research, internationalization, investment in information technology, and distance learning are some of the new initiatives. Tension in the system has been kept at a minimum.

SUNY Responds to Challenges of the 21st Century

John W. Ryan
Chancellor, State University of New York

The overall theme for this year's Accreditation and Quality Assurance Conference is "Innovation for Strength." Of course, strength is essential, as well, to innovation— the strength of vision; the strength of leadership.

I am honored to be included with such distinguished panelists, all nationally and internationally known for the vision and leadership they have provided their university systems.

System heads to be effective must have the support of our oversight boards. They, too, must possess the capacity to recognize the need for change and the courage to effect it—must demonstrate vision and strength.

I happen to be very fortunate in New York to have a dynamic Board of Trustees. The Trustees have been willing to chart a new course for State University; one that responds to the many changes in our environment.

In our work in New York, we are guided by *Rethinking SUNY*, which was commissioned in 1995 by Governor Pataki and the State Legislature to review and recast the State University. *Rethinking SUNY* reaffirms our traditional emphasis on **decentralization** and local campus responsiveness.

There is a line from *Rethinking SUNY* that I would like to quote: "To achieve th[e] goal [of broad access to a high-quality education] in a climate of constrained resources, it will be necessary to become more self-sufficient and entrepreneurial, more focused, and more creative."

I would like now to review briefly how SUNY has responded to each element of this directive.

How are we assisting our campuses in becoming more self-sufficient? We begin by a commitment to reduce redundant administrative burdens on campuses. But what is redundant? What is unnecessary? We think the solution begins with uncoupling policy-making (the Board of Trustees' responsibility), from operations (the responsibility of the individual campuses).

Rethinking SUNY stresses the need for each campus to maintain maximum discretionary authority and flexibility; it is the best way to fulfill the responsibilities of a modern University to the faculty and staff, to the students, and to the surrounding communities. Correspondingly, we must recognize and reward those who do achieve, who move each campus toward higher quality, genuine access, and managerial effectiveness.

Hence, the Trustees approved a more campus-specific methodology for allocating financial resources, more specifically rewarding campus success in achieving objectives. Our new allocation process further enhances the initiative of campuses by permitting them to retain and allocate the revenues they generate, including tuition. Our campuses now have added incentive to build partnerships with the private business sector, knowing they will retain any fruits from their labors.

The new funding process also recognizes campuses endeavoring to act more collaboratively. Rather than receiving individual allotments, the five University Colleges of Technology will be funded as a group, because of the progress these colleges have made as a strategic coalition providing unique educational experiences. They will receive resources to provide special programs important to their students.

Our campuses must also become more focused within the SUNY system; perhaps confederation is a better term. We do not have a single flagship university with satellite campuses. We have an array of 64 distinctly individual campuses, each contributing to

the quality education the system as a whole provides across a broad spectrum to a diverse constituency.

But it stands to reason that if each campus possesses a distinctive quality, then each college cannot be all things to all students. The State University's Mission Review initiative seeks to cultivate the singularity of each campus. Hence, the locus for Mission Review is the campuses.

Mission Review is a process by which the campuses engage in a constructive dialogue with their constituencies on a range of issues important to all of them. Our campuses thus will consider such matters as demography, program offerings and standards, and the campus role in the State University system. They will more effectively identify their distinctive academic qualities, and strengthen their position in the higher education market.

The Mission Review dialogue will culminate in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by each of the campus presidents and myself. It will become the standard for planning and evaluating each institution's progress. Our role at System Administration is to monitor the success each campus realizes in achieving the mission it has set for itself, and reporting our assessment to the Trustees.

I expect, also, much of the creative ways the State University and its campuses are responding to the demands of modern higher education. For example, this fall 37 of our campuses have joined in offering 200 courses via the SUNY Learning Network. Fully 2,000 students will avail themselves of these courses—courses which they otherwise would not have been able to take. In fact there are two students enrolled at Monroe Community College this semester, who are accessing the SUNY Learning Network from Shantou, China.

It certainly is exciting to consider the global dimension of the SUNY Learning Network; no less important is its impact on local New Yorkers seeking a college education. Many possess the drive and commitment—but because of family or work responsibilities, they lack only the opportunity. The SUNY Learning Network opens to them access to a college education.

That is a thumbnail sketch of SUNY's initiatives intended to enable us to respond effectively to the challenges we will face in the 21st century; how we are fostering "Innovation for Strength."

Classroom-based Assessment in General Education

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Classroom-based assessment is a powerful tool for institutions seeking to improve student learning in general education and to follow Middle States assessment requirements. Student learning may be assessed by direct or indirect measures. Indirect measures such as students' perception of their own learning or surveys of employers may be part of an institution's total assessment plan, but they are not our concern in this essay. Rather, we limit our discussion to direct assessment of student learning. Institutions will generally want to include at least some direct assessment of student learning among the modes of assessment they employ. Direct assessment requires:

1. Learning goals and specific competencies to be assessed

2. A student performance of some kind that demonstrates student mastery of the goals/competencies—for example a paper, speech, spreadsheet, musical performance, or practical action in a real or simulated situation

3. A set of criteria and standards for measuring the student's performance. "Criteria" are the aspects of the student performance that will be evaluated—for example, "organization" or "tone quality" or "eye contact" or "consideration of alternative actions." "Standards" are the level of performance that students must reach in order to be awarded a certain score on the criteria. For example, the highest score may be awarded to a student who continually maintains eye contact with the audience and who also distributes eye contact to every part of the room.

4. Ways of collecting and analyzing the data

5. Ways of closing the feedback loop—that is, using the information to make improvements in the general-education curriculum or pedagogy

In addition to defining direct assessment of student learning, we must also define "classroom-based." Classrooms and classroom teachers are and must be always involved in assessment. Even if students are given a standized test some Saturday morning in the gym, totally separate from any classroom work otherwise required of them within the curriculum, classroom teachers need to be involved in choosing the test and deciding how the results will be used. Likewise, assessment used for institutional improvement of general-education must always involve the institution as a whole, even if that assessment is situated within a class. Thus the term "classroom-based" assessment of student learning is somewhat ambiguous. However, in common parlance, what makes assessment of student learning "classroom-based" is that the student performance (no. 2 above) is completed by students as part of their classroom work.

160

It is not the purpose of this essay to discuss the pros and cons of classroom-based assessment, but this paragraph summarizes them briefly. One factor in classroom-based assessment is the difficulty of comparing work from one class with work from another or arriving at a single score that can be compared across courses, disciplines, and institutions. This inability to produce a single number may be a disadvantage when such comparable measures are needed for legitimate uses, but may also be an advantage in contexts where single numbers representing student performance may be misused for simplistic and misleading comparisons among institutions or for high-stakes resource allocation. Another factor in classroom-based assessment is the widespread faculty involvement required to implement assessment in multiple classrooms. Such involvement may be difficult to achieve, but may in the end result in a strong assessment program precisely because of the extent of faculty involvement. A strength of classroom-based assessment is that assignments and exams integrated into students' regular coursework are likely to elicit greater student attention and effort than some standardized or faculty-constructed test they take separate from any course, and whose outcomes makes no difference to the student personally. Classroom assignments can embody many of the best practices for assessment recommended by the American Association for Higher Education.[1] For example, classroom tests and assignments can be embedded in the learning process, administered over time, reflect the learning goals that the course is striving to achieve, and yield directly usable feedback for student and teacher.

This essay assumes that, considering these advantages and disadvantages, an institution has chosen classroom-based assessment as a component of its assessment plan. Within the broad definition of "classroom assessment" are many variables among which the institution must choose. Particularly, the

1 Best practices are available from AAHE at One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC, and they are reprinted in Walvoord and Anderson (1998b), Appendix A, pp. 189–191

institution must choose which aspects of assessment are to be left to the discretion of the classroom teacher and which are to be decided or at least influenced by some larger body such as the department, a general-education committee, or central administrators. These choices are our topic in this essay. We first present the choices and a brief outline of how an institution may implement them. Then we present fuller descriptions of two institutions that have chosen different versions of classroom-based assessment.

We said earlier that both the classroom and the institution must always be involved in institutional assessment of general-education, whether or not any of the assessment is "classroom-based." In classroom-based assessment, the institution must choose among various ways of involving both the classroom teacher and broader bodies such the department, general-education committee, or central administration. The areas of choice on which we concentrate in this essay are outlined in Figure 1.

We can illustrate the various choices shown in Figure 1 by examining how two different institutions—Mercy College in New York and Raymond Walters College of the University of Cincinnati—have implemented classroom-based assessment of General Education. This section of the essay presents a brief overview of how each college chose the different variables presented in Figure 1. Following the overview, we present a more details account of each college's plan.

Two Models of Classroom-based General Education Assessment: An Overview

Raymond Walters College, a two-year branch campus of the University of Cincinnati, has decided as a college (led by the faculty Academic Assessment Committee) that critical thinking was one of the learning goals they wanted to assess. However, based on their belief that critical thinking was discipline-specific, they leave to the individual teacher the description of the specific

Figure 1

Variables in Classroom-based Assessment

Variable	Mercy	RWC
Who identifies the learning goals that will be assessed?	C	C
Who translates the learning goals into competencies specific enough to be assessed?	C	I
Who establishes guidelines for integrating competency assessment into the course?	C	I
Who establishes the criteria and standards against which student work will be measured?	C	I
Who establishes the format in which the assessment criteria and standards and/or the collected data will be arranged?	C	C
Who establishes specific ways to define, teach, and assess the competencies?	I	I

Legend:

I = Individual Teacher

C = Collaborative Effort Among Faculty (e.g. decision made by department, general-education committee, and/or central administration)

competencies of critical thinking. For example, in English, critical thinking might mean the ability to analyze works of literature; in dental hygeine it might mean the ability to select treatments and approaches for particular dental problems. Faculty members themselves choose from among their own classroom tests and assignments those that will be used for general education assessment of critical thinking. So the literature teacher might choose an essay of literary analysis and the dental hygeine teacher might choose a clinical decision-making

situation. Each faculty member has total discretion about how those tests and assignments are integrated within the course.

Likewise, the individual faculty member establishes the criteria and standards by which students' critical thinking is to be measured. For example, the literature teacher may choose "organization" as one criterion, and might describe three to five levels of competence, the highest of which is a clearly discernible, logical organizational plan that supports the writer's thesis. The dental hygiene teacher may choose "defining the problem" as a criterion, for which the highest score would be achieved by the student who considered and integrated all relevant information in defining the problem. The assignment or test, as well as the criteria and standards, might well be used by the teacher to establish the students' grades, but when the teacher submits the aggregated data for general-education assessment of critical thinking, she uses a college-wide format called "primary-trait analysis" (PTA), which the assessment committee has chosen and which every teacher is expected to use. PTA is a particular format for expressing criteria and standards. It identifies the specific traits or criteria such as "organization," and under each trait it describes what high-level and lower-level performances would look like. The student's work is given a score for each criterion. Thus, separate from grading, a student's work can receive a PTA score just for certain traits that the teacher identifies as belonging to critical thinking in that discipline.

At Raymond Walters College, faculty members bring to a department meeting one assignment or test that measures critical thinking in their discipline, a PTA scale for that assignment/test, and student scores for one semester or, if possible, for previous semesters as well. The faculty member discusses the scores with his or her colleagues, and together they decide whether department-level action is required. For example, a biology teacher of a senior capstone course might report low student scores on "quantifying and graphically representing data," and the department may decide to teach these skills more intensively in the introductory course. Departments write reports about their

annual department meetings. The institution-wide Academic Assessment Committee, on which the college dean sits as *ex officio*, reviews the departmental reports and recommends institutional action. For example, if quantification and graphing of data are problematic in several disciplines, the dean may fund an off-campus retreat for the faculty in mathematics and in those disciplines whose students take mathematics, to review their common needs and expectations and make whatever curricular and pedagogical changes seem advisable.

Raymond Walters College represents a model that gives the classroom teacher a great deal of autonomy and restricts institution-wide bodies only to choosing the learning goals to be assessed, defining the format for each teacher to present his/her classroom data, and facilitating departmental and institutional use of the data. The classroom teacher closes the feedback loop by using the information to improve his or her classroom pedagogy. Two other feedback loops—the department and the university levels—are completed through faculty sharing the data from their classroom assessments. Not all information needs to be acted on or even shared at all levels. A teacher's assessment may suggest to her that she teach "organization" in a different way, she does so, student work scores higher on that trait, and she reports this at her department meeting. The department's role is to ensure that her classroom assessment is taking place and to provide a forum for encouragement and sharing among colleagues. The department does not need to act on her findings; she has already taken appropriate action. However, if the teacher reports that students' ability to quantify and graph scientific data is not what it should be when they enter her capstone biology course as seniors, then the department may take action as a unit, changing its curriculum to include work on quantification and graphing in an earlier course.

The role of the institutional general-education committee is to receive departmental reports. Again, one of the institution's tasks is to ensure that individual and departmental assessment is taking place and that data are being used for improvement at classroom and department levels. The institution also identifies problems

that transcend any single department and, therefore, require institutional action. The dean budgets funds each year specifically for the purpose of responding to assessment initiatives that come to her from individuals, departments, and the Academic Assessment Committee. This provides the link to budget and planning that the accrediting association, as well as good administrative practice, requires. The closing of these three feedback loops, with appropriate roles for faculty, departments, institutional committees, and dean, is further described in Walvoord and Anderson (1998a).

Institutional bodies play a greater role in the Mercy College general-education assessment model. At Mercy, a four-year liberal-arts institution, the college-wide curriculum committee defined the general learning goals to be assessed. As at RWC, these included "critical thinking" and "quantitative reasoning." But at Mercy, the college-level committee took the next step, defining four specific areas and, within each area, demonstrable skills that were then approved by the Faculty Senate. The basic assumption behind the Mercy plan was that specific competencies and skills could be defined college-wide and taught and assessed in courses across the disciplines. This was different from RWC's assumption that specific aspects of "critical thinking" are highly discipline-specific and that it would be difficult or impossible to define competencies that were specific enough to be tested by classroom work and yet applicable across disciplines. So the RWC plan stops with the general term "critical thinking" and then lets the classroom teachers define what that means in the various disciplines.

In the Mercy plan, departments take responsibility for embedding assessment of the college-defined competencies into junior or senior courses in the major. The model is collaborative, as individual teachers and the department converse about the appropriate tests and assignments that will be embedded in the courses. The RWC model, on the other hand, attempts no formal top-down influence on teachers' tests and assignments, but simply asks each teacher to use, as the basis for assessment, one

test or assignment that she uses in her course and that she believes assesses critical thinking in her discipline.

The Raymond Walters College Plan in Detail

Because the RWC plan has been described elsewhere, this section simply references those sources:

Website for RWC assessment:
www.rwc.uc.edu/phillips/index_assess.html

Most recent description, focusing on closing the feedback loop: Walvoord and Anderson (1998a).

More detailed description of how RWC developed its plan: Cooper-Freytag, Walvoord, and Denton (1998).

Brief discussion for an accreditation conference: Benander, Denton, and Walvoord (1997).

RWC's plan in the broader context of classroom assessment for individual teachers: Walvoord and Anderson, 1998b.

Early description focusing on basic principles: Walvoord, et al. (1996).

General Education Reform: A Cross-curricular Model
The Mercy College Plan in Detail

In 1985, the faculty at Mercy College embarked upon a two-year discussion aimed at revising the general education curriculum. Consultants and well-known curricular reformers were invited to the College to share their ideas and to inform the debate. The end result of this process was a 48–credit distribution model for general education. It was essentially a political compromise which reflected departmental posturing.

Five years after the birth of the new general education program, the faculty dissatisfaction in classrooms gave us a growing sense that the collection of courses distributed over the disciplines was not achieving the nine general education goals which had laid the foundation of the program. As the faculty had designated a five-year review process when the program was originally adopted, the curriculum committee set out to evaluate the effectiveness of the general education program in 1992. They surveyed faculty and students, interviewed faculty, tested students, and analyzed pass rates on exit exams for foundation courses in English Composition and Mathematics. Their conclusion, not surprisingly, was that the general education program as it was organized was not accomplishing what it was designed to accomplish. In particular, students who completed the program were not able to write, think critically, or compute at an adequate level.

The question became what to do then. Should the credit distribution questions be reopened? As the remembrance of the long, and at times acrimonious, debates over credit allocations were still a fresh memory, few members of the curriculum committee were eager to reopen this process. And it was clear that the course distribution model had not been successful. Instead, the Committee decided to focus on the desired student outcomes—especially in the area of foundation skills—and on bringing coherence to the program. Rather than reopening the debate about how many credits in each discipline was appropriate, they decided to develop a set of cross-curricular competencies that emphasized student outcomes.

The curriculum committee chose to begin by defining student competencies in four areas. The four were fundamental foundation skill areas: written and oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative reasoning. The curriculum committee established four cross-disciplinary task forces to define minimum graduation competencies in each area. Task forces worked for approximately one year, with intermittent draft reports back to the curriculum committee. Open faculty forums were scheduled to report progress and debate the evolving definition of

competency in each area. Within 18 months, a set of demonstrable skills for each area had been defined and approved by the Faculty Senate.

The idea behind the competencies was to have the students achieve the goals of the general education curriculum by explicitly defining the outcomes that would demonstrate the achievement of those goals. Students might then be held accountable for their achievement of these outcomes. Faculty might then become engaged in explicitly teaching these skills through the liberal arts curriculum. The general education curriculum itself would achieve coherence by the integration of the competencies into every course in the general education curriculum.

Although definition of the competencies and faculty assent to that definition was a significant first step, the curriculum committee determined that three additional steps would be required to achieve the goals of student achievement and coherence of the general education curriculum:

- ❑ An implementation plan had to be designed to engage faculty in the integration of the competencies throughout the general education curriculum.
- ❑ An assessment plan to measure student achievement against the stated outcomes had to be developed and implemented.
- ❑ A plan had to be developed to offer students remediation who did not meet the minimum level of competency area prior to graduation.

Philosophically, we were committed to a shared responsibility:

- the student's responsibility to achieve the stated level of performance in each area;
- the faculty's responsibility to teach the courses in such a way that students had the opportunity to acquire the requisite skills as they progressed through the general education curriculum; and

- the College's responsibility to provide every reasonable means for the student to acquire the necessary skills.

The implementation plan consisted of four parts:

- the incorporation of the competencies **explicitly** into the individual course outlines for each section of every general education course;
- faculty development to support this effort and to encourage innovation in course design;
- widespread dissemination of competency requirements to all new students—all transfer students—and all students who were beginning a major; and
- development of assessment tools to measure student achievement and a mechanism to report results.

First, the task force designed information booklets for students and faculty to explain the philosophy behind the establishment of the competencies. The booklets defined each competency, explained how the competencies would be integrated into every general education course, and outlined the overall plan to assess student achievement. The competencies were also published in the *Catalogue* and the *Student Handbook*. The committee took many opportunities over two full years to inform both students and faculty about this initiative.

A series of faculty workshops were scheduled over a two-year period. Workshops were conducted by our own faculty as well as by external consultants. Successful models were gathered from other institutions and disseminated, and books and articles were distributed to each department. At various intervals, the implementation subcommittee collected syllabi and course outlines, reviewed them, and forwarded suggestions to department chairs. Implementation reports and discussions were inserted into every major faculty gathering, such as Faculty Seminar Day and Faculty Senate meetings.

Grade rosters were designed for faculty to evaluate and provide feedback to students in every general education course. These rosters do not become a part of the student's transcript but serve to give the student notice regarding his or her progress toward achieving the competencies, prior to the final assessment in their senior year.

As opposed to using a standardized test, faculty chose to employ a model of course-embedded assessment to measure student achievement. Each major program of study has developed a General Education Competency assessment at the junior and senior level. The assignment is embedded in a junior and senior level course in the student's major. Hence, the competency skills are reinforced throughout the major courses, and the faculty in each major program take responsibility for evaluation, monitoring student progress, and advising students along the way. Faculty work with students who do not meet the minimum standard at the junior level to assist them in acquiring the skills necessary to pass the senior level assessment prior to graduation. Students who do not pass the competency assessment prior to graduation have the following systems available to them:

- departmental advising and tutoring,
- opportunity to retake appropriate courses to improve skills,
- skill building assistance through the learning center, and
- independent Study.

The Mercy College plan for the assessment of the General Education competencies is an effort to define first what the general competencies are that any recipient of a bachelor's degree should have and then to track students' development of these competencies throughout their careers. This process should result in not only an assessment of students' competencies but also an assessment of every course the College offers to measure whether or not these competencies are being taught. We are at the beginning stages of implementation but have already seen improvements in student writing in particular and improvements in course syllabi to emphasize the learning of particular

competencies in addition to content. There are some problems ahead, most notably the issue of holding up a student's graduation. It is the feeling of a growing group of faculty that course grades should reflect achievement of competencies and that a separate measure is not appropriate. The discussion will continue and will continue to enrich our academic community.

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Governance, Governing Boards, and Regional Accreditation

Report of the Advisory Committee on Governance, Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Executive Summary

> The governing board is the legally constituted body that serves the public interest by seeing that the institution is what it is intended to be, that it fulfills its announced mission and goals, and ensures its continuity.
>
> ("Functions of Boards of Trustees in Higher Education")

Rapid changes in the social, political, economic, and technological environment in which institutions of higher education operate today have created new responsibilities and challenges for the boards that govern them. Colleges and universities must negotiate shifting, and often competing, priorities because of internal and external pressures associated with demands for cost containment and reduction, productivity, funding for student financial aid, utilization of technology to enhance and expand access to instruction, and public accountability.

These pressures and changes have altered expectations about higher education and how it is conceptualized. Many traditional assumptions have been replaced by new and evolving educational approaches, patterns, and models. Within this context, chief executive officers, faculty, administrators, and governing boards must create new strategies to ensure the continuing survival and integrity of their institutions.

The governing board must ensure the survival of an institution while fulfilling its commitment to provide the best education possible for its students. Two important components of the governing board's role are to create policies that establish institutional outcomes and to establish conditions that will enable institutions to realize their distinct missions.

In order to address such issues, the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools charged the Advisory Committee on Governance to:

- review the literature and examine the issues regarding the changing roles and responsibilities of the governing board, the nature and diversity of evolving governance structures, and the broad tradition of shared governance in academe;
- reexamine the Commission on Higher Education's policy statement on the functions of the governing board and the section on governing boards found in *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education* to determine if modifications are needed to address the multiple challenges facing higher education; and
- make recommendations to the Commission on Higher Education regarding its policies concerning the evaluation of institutional governance structures and practices.

In response to the charge, this report articulates issues regarding institutional governance, governing boards, and the role of regional accreditation. The Advisory Committee believes that the suggestions and recommendations presented in this report will aid the Commission as it attempts to enhance and strengthen its policies and practices concerning the nature of governance and the roles of governing boards. The Committee also hopes that this report will serve as the basis for a continuing dialogue by the members of the Commission regarding the vital role of governance in higher education.

Recommendations

Here is a summary of the recommendations the Advisory Committee on Governance presented to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education on June 24–25, 1998.

A. Shared Governance: Participation in Institutional Decisionmaking

- ❑ Encourage colleges and universities, as well as campuses within public multi-campus systems, to articulate and periodically review the adequacy of their own principles of and mechanisms for participation in institutional governance. The participation of major stakeholders, both internal and external to the institution should reflect and be consistent with its history, traditions, mission, values, and uniqueness. A formal statement of principles and guidelines should clarify how consultation and involvement in decisionmaking should be conducted.

- ❑ Encourage the governing board, in consultation with the chief executive officer, to consider inviting specialists external to the institution to consult with the board, the chief executive officer, faculty and staff on planning issues which involve complex areas or specialized knowledge when internal expertise is limited

- ❑ Urge chief executive officers to assure that campus stakeholders are fully cognizant of their roles and responsibilities in upholding the integrity and continuity of the institution, and are oriented to the principles of shared governance

B. Accountability Issues

- ❑ Encourage governing boards, consistent with *Characteristics*, to ensure that clearly defined channels for communication are in place to facilitate the consultative process and the involvement of campus stakeholders in

decisionmaking, and to set parameters regarding the circumstances under which it will take place

- ❑ Reinforce to trustees that one of the basic assumptions of "shared governance" is that board members are advocates of the institution as a whole, rather than representatives of special interest groups on campus issues

- ❑ Urge governing boards to establish and implement a conflict of interest policy statement as well as a procedure for an annual disclosure of potentially problematic relationships or arrangements, which may prove harmful to the institution

- ❑ Encourage trustees to establish an ongoing dialogue during scheduled board meetings in order to assess whether actual outcomes are consistent with its institutional mission

C. Monitoring Board Performance

- ❑ Urge institutions to establish and implement an orientation process, as well as provide other informational and educational experiences, for members of the governing board

- ❑ Urge each governing board to conduct a periodic self-evaluation and of individual board member performance

- ❑ Urge governing boards to establish principles of good practice that will serve to enhance board effectiveness and provide a basis for the assessment of board performance

D. Working Relations with the Chief Executive Officer

- ❑ Urge institutions to establish procedures for presidential searches, for performance evaluation of the chief executive officer by the governing board, and for setting the chief executive officer's compensation

176

E. Role of Regional Accreditation

The Advisory Committee urges the Commission on Higher Education to:

- ❑ Pursue collaborative and coordinated approaches with other higher education organizations and agencies on the topic of governance
- ❑ Consider the inclusion of system offices in the decennial accreditation review
- ❑ Consider expanding the use of trustees in evaluation team visits
- ❑ Develop guidelines on good practices and policies on governance for peer-reviewers, using the recommendations and ideas expressed in this report
- ❑ Reinforce the benefits associated with linking the assessment of the governing board's performance to the self-study. The governing board should be able to demonstrate that it has conducted a rigorous self-assessment of board performance and has participated in the institution-wide self-study process. However, assessments of board performance should occur more frequently than every 10 years.

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Commission on Higher Education. (1995). Functions of boards of trustees in higher education (p. 7). *Policies and procedures* (5th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Author, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Remarks of Marvin Greenberg, Panel Member at AQA 1998 Conference

I'm going to focus my comments on the report from a trustee prospective.

A properly conducted orientation for new board members is an extremely important investment in future productive participation in governance by the newcomers. Among other pluses, the introduction will: provide basic information about the college and the manner in which the board will conduct its business, enlighten new members about the traditional roles of the various college constituencies, state expectations of the contributions of individual members in expertise, experience, financially and in other ways, and note goals for board performance.

The board, with the president, must determine and make known widely: what it requires for its information, when and with whom there will be consultation, where decisions are concluded, and what processes are followed for all actions.

Additionally, the board should: assess the consistency of outcomes with the college mission; establish clear conflict of interest policies; be accountable; periodically evaluate its performance and that of individual members; and in addition to supporting the president, review his or her performance and salary with preset procedures.

When internal expertise in complex areas, or where specialized information is limited, the board should, in discussion with the president, consider inviting external specialists to consult with appropriate college constituencies.

While respecting the often long periods for recommendations to be brought forward from the academic community, the board has a right to expect timely responses in consultations.

I join with my colleagues in the other recommendations of the report.

Financial Resources, Institutional Effectiveness, and Accreditation

Report of the Advisory Committee on Institutional Financial Resources, Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Executive Summary

The higher education community has been involved in a delicate and precarious balancing act that has entailed cost containment and, increasingly, cost reduction, while struggling to sustain the integrity and enhance the quality of programs and services. Colleges and universities across the country are attempting to identify and employ strategies that will enable them to manage change effectively and purposefully—whether it is contending with shifting enrollments, mounting financial pressures, changing student demographics, externally-imposed regulations, or the restructuring of academic programs and administrative services.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has asserted its commitment to explore ways in which it can aid institutions as they attempt to address these critical issues, help inform the public about the realities of institutional costs, and use the accreditation process to ensure that the financial resources of member institutions are sufficient to maintain the quality, continuity, and integrity of programs and services.

In an effort to achieve these goals, the Advisory Committee on Institutional Financial Resources was established to articulate and review these issues and to offer recommendations to the Commission on policies, procedures, and practices needed to

help institutions negotiate a dynamically changing environment of shifting resource structures.

The charge to the Advisory Committee was to:

- advise the Commission on how to educate the public about the role of finances in education and the role of the Commission,
- identify sources of information and resources member institutions can use regarding consortial and other approaches or methodologies which foster cooperation, consultation, and collaboration,
- consider whether the Commission needs to enhance its monitoring of institutional fiscal resources, and
- examine Commission policies, procedures, and practices concerning the assessment of institutional financial resources and the Commission's ability to assure the quality and continuity of an institution's programs and services.

In fulfillment of that charge, this report examines issues concerning institutional financial resources from an accreditation perspective. The Advisory Committee is concerned foremost with (1) the impact these issues could have on an institution's ability to assure the quality and continuity of its programs and services, and (2) with the role of the Commission in the assessment of an institution's effectiveness. As a result, the Advisory Committee offers several recommendations to expand and enhance the leadership role of the Commission.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the Advisory Committee are presented within the framework of three key areas. They are:

- Recalibrating Measures of Effectiveness
- Revisiting Accreditation and Self-Review Processes
- Increasing Communication and Public Outreach

A. Recalibrating Measures of Effectiveness

- ❑ Encourage institutions to broaden the scope of their self-studies during the accreditation process to include the assessment of institutional financial indicators as one measure of effectiveness

- ❑ Encourage institutions to conduct cost-benefit studies which incorporate strategies to increase efficiency and productivity, and to promote the involvement of appropriate campus constituencies in planning and decisionmaking activities

- ❑ Continue the Commission's efforts to make the assessment of institutional outcomes one of the primary indicators of quality in the accreditation process

B. Revisiting Accreditation and Self-Review Processes

- ❑ Encourage institutions to use benchmarking and best practices for purposes of establishing indicators and conducting financial self-assessment reviews

- ❑ Consider how process-based assessments can be employed by peer reviewers during evaluation visits

- ❑ Develop guidelines for use by institutions and peer-reviewers that will: (a) outline approaches and strategies utilized by other institutions to attain productivity, efficiency, and cost containment goals; (b) emphasize the need to maintain reserves, to the extent possible, to fund institutional change and renewal initiatives; and (c) identify resources and methodologies that can help institutions conduct introspective financial analyses

- ❑ Convene an *ad hoc* committee to develop these guidelines (Above all, the guidelines should offer specific and deliberate steps that institutions can use to help them move in the direction that the Commission envisions.)

- ❑ The Advisory Committee encourages the Commission to articulate how institutions can use the self-study to explore institutional processes to support and enhance decisionmaking regarding efficiency, productivity, and resource allocation.

- ❑ Clarify statements on institutional effectiveness found in *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, emphasizing that it should be measured only within the context of institutional mission

- ❑ Consider merging sections in *Characteristics* on "Planning and Resource Allocation" and "Financial Resources" under a single heading

C. Increasing Communication and Public Outreach

- ❑ Enhance communication with colleges and universities and the general public regarding higher education's attempts to establish greater congruence between cost and quality issues using outcomes as one measure of institutional effectiveness

- ❑ Encourage CHEA to work cooperatively with the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics to resolve issues concerning data collection, definition of terms, and the timeliness of IPEDS data

- ❑ Encourage institutions to work with national higher education organizations on issues such as the disclosure of data as well as the sharing of information with other higher education institutions

- ❑ Send the Advisory Committee's report to Middle States member institutions and request feedback for use in the scheduled review of *Characteristics*.

- ❑ Enhance and expand the Commission's leadership role in helping institutions develop and articulate public communication and outreach strategies to advance the perspectives presented in this report

- ❑ Consider the development and publication of a joint statement with other higher education organizations to communicate a cohesive message about academe's concerns and strategies to address issues regarding institutional financial resources and costs

- ❑ Co-sponsor conferences, workshops, or other fora with other organizations in order to promote the expression of ideas and the sharing of information that would benefit the higher education community as well as address the public's need for clear, precise, and accurate information

- ❑ The Middle States Commission should investigate and publicize the costs as well as the benefits associated with regional accreditation.

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Remarks of Rita J. Carney, Panel Member at AQA 1998 Conference

What Do Colleges and Universities Need To Do To Communicate the Truth to the General Public about the Cost of Higher Education?

It is my pleasure to lead us in some conversation about how we can tell the public that good news. Perhaps the best place to begin is by asking ourselves, "What is the public perception?" The American Council on Education (1998) reports six findings from its study:

1. The public believes that higher education is vitally important.

2. The public worries a great deal about the price of attending college, believes it is too expensive, and thinks the price can be brought down without affecting academic quality.

3. The public has a distorted view of what it costs to attend college.

4. The public has no idea why college prices increase.

5. The public does not know how much financial aid is available to help meet college bills, where it comes from, or how to get it.

6. The public thinks that college leaders are indifferent to their concerns about the price of attending college.

What can we do about that? First, we can realize that affordability is key. If I'm going to a store to buy a refrigerator, I don't really want to hear why the price went up from last year or how the manufacturer economized. I probably do want to hear about some of the features and what I'll get for my money, but my key concern will be whether or not I can afford it.

Next, we can learn from those in marketing. Have you seen those full-page ads that the airlines place? They don't advertise their highest price, do they? What they do is provide some sample prices and then in smaller print at the bottom say, "Some restrictions may apply." About 80 to 90 percent of our students receive some form of aid. Why do we in higher education feel the need to state the full price that very few ever pay while rarely, if ever, quoting the amount that most people pay?

Another example for us can be found in the hotel industry. It is not at all unusual for people to pay different rates for identical rooms right next door to each other. The public knows and accepts the fact that some people may get a discount because they reserved early, because they are with a special group, or perhaps because they use a certain credit card or belong to an organization such as AARP (if they'll admit to being over 50). Different pricing structures and incentives in higher education may be accepted just as easily.

We can also learn from those in retailing. A computer may be worth $2,000, but that is not the number in large bold print in the ad, is it? Instead, that number may be dwarfed by a sign that says $899. And, in case one still finds that unaffordable, there's another sign that says $29 a month, which brings it within reach of almost everyone. Regretably, we all know students who can't afford even the $29 equivalent for tuition and who cannot attend the institution of their choice; but if we apply marketing techniques wisely, we may reach many who would never have thought they could afford it at all.

Let's move now from the concept of marketing affordability to the concept of bargain hunting. We can do more to explain the difference between cost and price. We can explain subsidies.

For example, on average a public institution is subsidized $6,000 by tax dollars. About one-third of the cost of education at the average private institution is subsidized by donors, endowment interest and other income such as auxiliary enterprises.

A good resource that many of you may be aware of is the ACE-sponsored "College Is Possible" campaign with over 1,000 institutions and organizations participating. The program provides information to students and parents on prices and financial aid. It also provides resources to colleges and universities in the form of sample ads, press releases, and help arranging radio interviews. The basic message is: college costs less than you think, aid is available, and we want to help!

What else can we do? We can help some audiences understand that the Consumer Price Index is only based on a fixed collection of items. Salaries and benefits for scholars, information technology equipment, library periodicals, and equipment for science labs are all increasing at much higher rates of inflation than the loaf of bread that the CPI is based upon.

We can also help some audiences understand that the needs and expectations of students and their parents are growing. We cannot provide yesterday's education today and expect to prepare people for tomorrow.

Something else we can do is to capitalize on the public view that higher education is vital. There are some who will understand that an extra $100 for a lab fee is a better investment than the same amount for designer sneakers.

Jobs and career preparation are words that almost everyone can relate to. The U.S. Bureau of the Census reported in 1996 that a high school graduate can be expected to have lifetime earnings of $979,000 as compared with a college graduate who will earn $1,627,000 on average. Unemployment for college grads is less than half that of high school grads. They are less likely to need government-sponsored support services, and they are more likely to pay more taxes to support those who do need them. We can say with confidence that higher education is an investment, and most of the public will understand that and agree with us. We can

communicate quality in outcomes terms—testimonies of graduates and employers, notable career paths, and graduation rates, to name a few.

A valuable new resource just published by NAICU (1998) summarizes the facts, suggests ways to communicate the story, and provides examples of what others have done. Although it is intended for independent institutions in particular, it has some excellent ideas for everyone, and I highly recommend it.

In closing, I would like to highlight several of the recommendations of our Advisory Committee on Institutional Financial Resources:

- ❑ Enhance communication with the public on cost and quality
- ❑ Work cooperatively on data issues, using the same language to facilitate sharing
- ❑ Communicate a cohesive message
- ❑ Co-sponsor conferences and workshops on sharing information that will benefit not only higher education but the public as well

Thank you very much!

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American Council on Education. (1998). *Too little knowledge is a dangerous thing. What the public thinks and knows about paying for college*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. (1998). *Behind the price tag: Intricacies of college cost, price, subsidy and affordability*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Planning the Next Review of *Characteristics of Excellence*

The members of the Steering Committee for the Review of *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, the Commission's statement of standards for the accreditation of colleges and universities, presented the following information during a panel discussion at the 1998 Accreditation and Quality Assurance Conference.

Guiding Principles for the Review

These "Guiding Principles" have been developed by the Steering Committee for the millennium review of the *Characteristics of Excellence* to provide the working task forces and the at-large membership a sense of purpose and direction for the development of both the context and the form of the revised standards. Clearly, it is also the Steering Committee's objective that significant discussion and debate relative to substantive, philosophic issues take place in the formative stages of the evolution of the revision. Finally, these "Principles" are stated to engender continuity among the task forces in their recommended revisions of the current standards and to stimulate discussion of omissions within the current vision.

Context

The millennium review of *Characteristics of Excellence* occurs at a watershed moment for peer accreditation, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and all of higher education. As we enter the 21st century, there is a changing higher education landscape with most institutions in a state of some

greater or lesser transition. It is both exciting and unsettling as new educational models and ways of delivering education programs and services evolve at all levels of higher education. The Steering Committee believes that the accreditation process, both self-study and external review, must acknowledge and adapt to these realities.

Further, increased scrutiny by all higher education consumers mandates that accreditation be more outcomes-based, less anecdotal, and more analytical; public policy makers at all levels look at peer accreditation with increased skepticism. In order for peer accreditation to continue serving as a provider of institutional quality assurance, an active agent for institutional improvement, and a mediator between institutions and their various publics, the accreditation process needs to be more thorough, more directive to its member institutions in terms of process, and yielding of more tangible outcomes than it ever has been. These "Principles" speak directly to the importance of standards that are clear, illustrated, measurable, tied to assessment and planning, and reflective of a "higher education" impact on students.

However, it is also important to note that these "Principles" are not intended to limit the work of the task forces; also, it is evident that these "Principles" will apply in varying extents, depending on the particular accreditation standard under review.

The Guiding Principles

1. Standards must be thoroughly defined and broadly illustrated, citing examples of evidence that could substantiate an institution's achievement of the standards.

Rationale/Intent:

Characteristics of Excellence must provide the institution with guidance relative to the achievement of each standard. The intent is to be directive, not prescriptive, while recognizing the diversity of institutions, mission, and educational practices that characterize the Middle States region.

2. Standards must contribute to the demonstration of institutional effectiveness, inclusive of all elements of an institution's mission, but with particular emphasis on student learning outcomes.

Rationale/Intent:

Individual institutions, through their mission, goals, and strategic planning, define their uniqueness and their anticipated impact upon students, human knowledge, society, and individual communities. The accreditation process must call upon institutions to demonstrate unequivocally institutional effectiveness through outcomes-based evidence reflective of these diverse elements of an institution's mission, including those that are not directly related to student learning or the provision of higher education for students (e.g. research, economic development, community service, work force training). Nonetheless, the standards must recognize the centrality of student learning to the demonstration of institutional effectiveness.

3. Standards must acknowledge the diversity of educational delivery systems by which an institution might meet accreditation standards.

Rationale/Intent:

Acknowledging the eclectic and evolving nature of educational processes, each accreditation standard must reflect options available for the achievement of such standards.

4. Standards must reflect an expected linkage between individual standards/component assessments and the institution's integrated strategic planning and continuous improvement activities.

Rationale/Intent:

There needs to be an emphasis within each standard on the relationship between the outcomes assessment of an activity

or element of the educational environment and the institutional, strategic planning process. Such planning, in the context of each standard, should be integrated into an institutional plan.

5. Standards must be consistent and applicable to any component/unit of educational programs included within the scope of an institution's accreditation.

Rationale/Intent:

No unit or element of the institution's educational delivery, whether it be systemic, procedural, or physical location, should be exempt from full achievement of each standard.

6. **While acknowledging the diverse elements that may comprise institutional mission, standards must affirm institutional capacity to serve students in a higher education context.**

Rationale/Intent:

Measurement of standards should be consistent with the expectation of demonstrating fulfillment of a higher education mission. This does not, however, preclude the necessity for higher education institutions to provide, consistent with their missions, necessary remediation or developmental learning and support that is directed to the improvement of student success in achieving higher education goals.

7. Standards must reflect the commitment of the higher education community to utilize self-assessment and peer review as agents for institutional improvement.

Rationale/Intent:

Each standard must stress the significance of self-study and peer evaluation as a developmental, not punitive, activity. The elements of the standards need to enable the institution

to see beyond a minimal level of achievement and motivate it to strive to do even more.

Structure for the review of *Characteristics of Excellence*

Primary task force responsibilities are designated here, with the understanding that some issues (e.g. integrity, technology, outcomes assessment, planning) may cut across the work of multiple task forces.

Steering Committee

In addition to having overall responsibility for the review process, the steering committee would have specific responsibility for these sections: foreword, eligibility requirements, and federal compliance.

Task Force #1: Institutional Effectiveness

This task force would include as part of its work the consideration of these current sections of *Characteristics*: mission, goals, & objectives; outcomes assessment; research & planning; and institutional change/renewal.

Task Force #2: Teaching and Learning

This task force would include as part of its work the consideration of these current sections of *Characteristics*: students, faculty, educational program/curricula, and library/learning resources.

Task Force #3: Institutional Support

This task force would include as part of its work the consideration of these current sections of *Characteristics*: financial resources/fiscal planning, facilities, and technology.

Task Force #4: Institutional Leadership

This task force would include as part of its work the consideration of these current sections of *Characteristics*: organization, administration, & governance; governing board; integrity; institutional advancement, promotion, and public relations (includes catalogs and publications).

Timetable for the review of *Characteristics of Excellence*

Feb 1998	Steering Committee appointed
June 1998	1st Steering Committee meeting
July 1998	Constituent surveys mailed
Sept 1998	Deadline for return of surveys
Oct 1998	2nd Steering Committee meeting
Nov 1998	Commission meeting (preliminary survey analysis, discussion of guiding principles, proposed task force structure, and related issues)
Dec 1998	AQA discussion led by Steering Committee
Dec 1998	3rd Steering Committee meeting (consider input from Commission and AQA participants; set charges and structure for task forces)
Jan-Mar 1999	Appointment of task forces; orientation of task force chairs
Apr-May 1999	Orientation/initial meetings of task forces
June 1999	Commission meeting (update)
June-Dec 1999	Task Forces work independently
Dec 1999	AQA discussions led by task forces; and post-AQA task force debriefing
Feb 2000	Commission meeting (update)
Mar 2000	Task forces submit reports to Steering Committee
Apr-May 2000	Steering Committee meets to review task force reports
June 2000	1st Committee draft to Commission
August 2000	2nd draft to membership for comment
Oct-Nov 2000	Steering Committee review of member comments

Dec 2000	AQA: *Characteristics* update
Feb-Apr 2001	Regional meetings
Apr-May 2001	Steering Committee review of regional input
June 2001	3rd draft to Commission (first review)
Aug-Sept 2001	Revised draft to membership for comment
Nov 2001	Revised draft to Commission (second review)
Jan 2002	Constituency approval by ballot
Feb 2002	Publication, with implementation schedule (Note: A multi-year schedule will be developed to phase in the revised standards as the basis for institutional self-study and evaluation.

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